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History
OF THE
Jodhpur State Forces
in the War, 1939-45.



Air Vice-Marshal His Highness Raj Rajeshwar Maharaja Dhiraj
Shri Sir Umaid Singhji Sahib Bahadur, G. C. S. I.,
G. C. I. E., K. C. V. O., A. D. C., LL. D.

-

HISTORY

OF THE

JODHPUR STATE FORCES

IN THE WAR, 1939-45

By

MAJOR GENERAL R. C. DUNCAN,
C.I.E., M.V.O., O.B.E.,
Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces,
late 5th Royal Gurkha Rifles F. F.

JODHPUR:

Printed at the Jodhpur Government Press,
1946.

P R E F A C E .

No account of the activities of the Jodhpur Sardar Rissala during the War of 1914-18 was ever written. This was a great pity, as the regiment gained a magnificent name for its fine fighting qualities, and a permanent record of its achievements during that war would have been of great interest to many people, and an inspiration to all ranks of the Jodhpur State Forces.

It was decided that this mistake should not be made again, so, with the approval of His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur of Jodhpur, this record of the Jodhpur State Forces during the War of 1939-45 has now been written.

My thanks are due to the following officers, who have assisted me in the writing of this history by sending me notes in connection with the time they spent with various units of the Jodhpur State Forces — Brigadier W.W.A. Loring, Lt.-Colonels H. B. Rogers, G. G. Collyns, S. F. Martin, G. A. C. Maunsell, Zabar Singh, M. B. E., Jawahir Singh, M. B. E., A. G. S. Alexander, C. A. S. Melville, and Ram Singh, D. S. O., and Majors H. M. Bromilow and Jaithu Singh. Also, to Lt.-Colonel A. J. B. Sinker for his chapter on No. 54 (Jodhpur) Company, R. I. A. S. C. (G. T.)

I owe a debt of deep gratitude to Jemadar Paras Ram Mathur, Headquarters, Jodhpur State Forces, for the tireless and invaluable work he has given in typing the whole manuscript and correcting the proofs.

I am sincerely grateful to Mr. Chain Puri, Superintendent, Jodhpur Government Press, for the interest and great trouble he has taken in the printing of this book with its photographs, and to Mr. Sukh Ram, general foreman, and the staff of the Jodhpur Government Press.

JODHPUR,
July, 1946.

RONALD DUNCAN.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	iii
INTRODUCTION	1—VI
CHAPTER I.	
HEADQUARTERS, JODHPUR STATE FORCES ..	1
CHAPTER II	
THE JODHPUR LANCERS	
PART I	10
PART II	41
CHAPTER III	
THE JODHPUR SARDAR INFANTRY.	
PART I	61
PART II	77
PART III	100
PART IV	107
CHAPTER IV	
THE SECOND JODHPUR INFANTRY	135
CHAPTER V	
THE THIRD JODHPUR INFANTRY — —	155
CHAPTER VI	
THE JODHPUR LANCERS TRAINING CENTRE —	165
CHAPTER VII	
THE JODHPUR INFANTRY TRAINING CENTRE —	175

CHAPTER VIII		PAGE
THE JODHPUR DEMONSTRATION COMPANY	..	180
 CHAPTER IX		
THE JODHPUR BODYGUARD	..	185
 CHAPTER X		
THE JODHPUR MULE TROOP	..	190
THE JODHPUR FORT GUARD	..	191
THE JODHPUR MILITARY HOSPITAL	..	193
THE LIAISON BRANCH, HEADQUARTERS, JODHPUR		
STATE FORCES	..	196
 CHAPTER XI		
No. 54 (JODHPUR) COMPANY R.I.A.S.C., (G.T.)		
PART I	..	199
PART II	..	201
PART III	..	209
PART IV	..	226
 CHAPTER XII		
SPEECHES AND ADDRESSES	..	234
THE LAST CHAPTER	..	244

List of Illustrations.

1. HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA SAHIB BAHADUR OF JODHPUR	FRONTISPIECE
	FACING PAGE
2. MAJOR GENERAL R.C. DUNCAN, C.I.E., M.V.O., O. B.E.	4
3. LT.-COL. RAO BAHADUR RAO RAJA SUJAN SINGH . .	6
4. LT.-COL. BAHADUR SINGH, BAHADUR, O.B.I. . .	12
5. JODHPUR LANCERS AS A HORSED UNIT . .	18
6. LT.-COL. G.G. COLLYNS	32
7. LT.-COL. W.W.A. LORING	32
8. LT. COL. E.J.R. EMTAGE	32
9. OFFICERS AND MEN OF "A" SQUADRON AT MAHANE YISRAEL CAMP NEAR AFFULA, PALESTINE . .	48
10. HIS HIGHNESS ON ARMoured CAR "AMBER" . .	50
11. HIS HIGHNESS INSPECTING "A" SQUADRON DURING HIS VISIT TO THE JODHPUR LANCERS AT ANDIMASK	50
12. HIS HIGHNESS WITH SIR AJEET SINGH, CAPTAIN HARI SINGH ETC.- WHEN HE VISITED THE JODHPUR LANCERS IN PERSIA	52
13. 1ST TROOP, 'A' SQUADRON NEAR HAIFA, JANUARY '46.	52
14. JODHPUR LANCERS RIFLE TEAM	54
15. "B" SQUADRON IN PALESTINE, JANUARY '46 . .	56
16. COLONEL AJEET SINGH CHATTING WITH OFFICERS OF THE JODHPUR LANCERS IN PERSIA	58
17. MEN OF 'A' SQUADRON WHO SHOT A PERSIAN STEALING WIRE AT SULTANABAD, PERSIA . .	58
18. A SQUADRON IN PALESTINE, JANUARY 1946 . .	60
19. A SQUADRON ON ITS WAY BACK FROM SULTANA- BAD TO JOIN THE JODHPUR LANCERS AT BISITUN, PERSIA	60

	FACING PAGE
20. LT.-COL. TH. LAWAHIR SINGH, M.B.E.	70
21. LT.-COL. H.B. ROGERS	74
22. JODHPUR SARDAR INFANTRY BATHING IN THE MEDITERRANEAN	80
23. JODHPUR SARDAR INFANTRY PRACTISING TRACK LAYING	80
24. BIVOUAC OF THE JODHPUR SARDAR INFANTRY AT BOUGIE . ..	82
25. STATE OFFICERS OF THE JODHPUR SARDAR INFANTRY AT BOUGIE, ALGERIA, BEFORE INVASION OF ITALY . ..	82
26. THE BEACHES AT SALERNO . ..	86
27. VIEW OF SALERNO	88
28. OFFICERS OF THE JODHPUR SARDAR INFANTRY WHO TOOK PART IN THE SALERNO LANDING ..	92
29. MEN OF THE JODHPUR SARDAR INFANTRY IN ITALY AFTER THE RAIN	94
30. OFFICERS AND INDIAN OTHER RANKS OF THE JODHPUR SARDAR INFANTRY WHO WERE AWARDED DECORATIONS FOR GALLANTRY IN ITALY	96, 98
31. OFFICERS AND INDIAN OTHER RANKS OF THE JODHPUR SARDAR INFANTRY WHO WERE MENTIONED IN DISPATCHES FOR GALLANT AND DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT IN ITALY.	100, 102 104, 106
32. LT.-COL. RAM SINGH, D.S.O.	108
33. AN OBSERVATION POST, JODHPUR SARDAR INFANTRY, IN ITALY	112
34. HIS HIGHNESS, INSPECTING THE JODHPUR SARDAR INFANTRY AT JODHPUR RAILWAY STATION.	128
35. HIS HIGHNESS, TAKING THE SALUTE OF THE JODHPUR SARDAR INFANTRY ..	128
36. THE JODHPUR SARDAR INFANTRY, ON RETURN FROM OVERSEAS, MARCHING THROUGH JODHPUR.	130
37. STATE AND INDIAN OFFICERS OF THE 2ND JODHPUR INFANTRY,	138
38. HIS HIGHNESS, INSPECTING THE 2ND JODHPUR INFANTRY PRIOR TO THE BATTALION LEAVING THE STATE	142

39. THE MAHARAJA OF JODHPUR INSPECTING THE 2ND JODHPUR INFANTRY BEFORE THE DEPARTURE OF THE BATTALION FROM THE STATE ..	144
40. LT.-COL. S.F. MARTIN	156
41. STATE AND INDIAN OFFICERS OF THE 3RD JODHPUR INFANTRY	156
42. LT.-COL. RAO BAHADUR HEER SINGH	158
43. LT.-COL. TH. ZABAR SINGH, M.B.E.	166
44. INSPECTION OF THE JODHPUR LANCERS TRAINING CENTRE BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER- IN-CHIEF	168
45. HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL SIR CLAUDE AUCHIN- LECK, INSPECTING THE JODHPUR LANCERS TRAINING CENTRE	172
46. THE JODHPUR LANCERS TRAINING CENTRE IN SQUADRON COLUMN	174
47. MAJOR MANGAL SINGH	186
48. CAPT. ACHAL SINGH	186
49. THE JODHPUR BODYGUARD	188
50. MAJOR P.R. BADVE, MEDICAL OFFICER	194
51. CAPTAIN RAI SAHIB SHREE KRISHNA TRIPATHI, STAFF CAPTAIN	194
52. LT.-COL. SHYAM SINGH, CHIEF LIAISON OFFICER ..	196
53. No. 54 (JODHPUR) GENERAL PURPOSES TRANS- PORT COMPANY R.I.A.S.C., AT JODHPUR RAILWAY STATION ON RETURN FROM SERVICE OVERSEAS.	202
54. THE COMPANY HALTED SOMEWHERE IN PALESTINE	214
55. MAJOR GENERAL DUNCAN AT KIRKUK RAILWAY STATION, IRAQ.	220
56. CLIMBING THE PERSIAN HILLS ON "AID TO RUSSIA" CONVOY DUTY	222
57. No. 54 (JODHPUR) COMPANY ON "AID TO RUSSIA" CONVOY DUTY HALTED OUTSIDE TABRIZ, ..	224

	FACING PAGE
58. MEN OF No. 54 (JODHPUR) COMPANY AT FOGGIA, ITALY	228
59. THE COMPANY HALTED ON A ROAD OUTSIDE ROME	230
36. No. 54 (JODHPUR) COMPANY, R.I.A.S.C. MARCHES PAST HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN INDIA	232
31. OFFICERS OF No. 54 (JODHPUR) COMPANY, R.I.A.S.C. (G.T.)	234

INTRODUCTION.

THE news of the outbreak of war with Germany on September 3rd, 1939, was not unexpected in Jodhpur. Those people who had studied the situation in Europe, during the preceding few years, had realised that war was almost inevitable. It might be put off for a time, but it was bound to come eventually. Most people realised that Germany had been arming for some years at an alarming pace with the probable object of overrunning the smaller countries round her and becoming the dominant power in Europe, if not in the world, whilst Britain and her Ally, France, had been slow in rearming for a war which could not be easily averted.

During 1938, and the first half of 1939, dramatic events happened in Europe in bewildering succession, and Germany seemed intent on pursuing a policy of ruthless aggression, which could have only one ending—war.

The situation in Europe in the autumn of 1938 appeared so disturbing and the outbreak of war seemed so imminent that His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur sent the following telegram to His Excellency the Viceroy on September 17th, 1938:—

“In view of the grave international situation, I feel it my duty to request your Excellency kindly to communicate to His Majesty the King Emperor an

expression of my unflinching loyalty to His Person and Throne in this crisis. I beg further to offer my personal services unreservedly and to place all the resources of my State, both Civil and Military, at the disposal of the Imperial Government in the event of war breaking out."

When the war, which every sane man or woman dreaded, did break out, it was known that the military strength of Germany was colossal, but few, if any, completely realised the magnitude of the task that lay ahead, and that the war would ultimately embrace the whole world.

In September 1939, the Jodhpur State Forces consisted of the following units:—

The Jodhpur Sardar Rissala (a horsed cavalry regiment) and a Training Squadron.

The Jodhpur Sardar Infantry.

The Jodhpur Mule Troop.

The Jodhpur Military Hospital.

The Fort Guard.

His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur was Commander-in-Chief, whilst Brigadier R. C. Duncan, M.V.O., O.B.E., was Commandant of the Jodhpur State Forces.

The strength of the Jodhpur State Forces at that time amounted to just over 1700 men. That number was to be increased more than four times during the grim years of war that lay ahead. It is probable that if anyone in pre-war years had predicted so large an expansion

of the State Forces, he would have been told to stop talking nonsense !

The Jodhpur Sardar Rissala was an "earmarked" unit, or, in other words, an unit, which could be demanded for service outside the State in the event of an emergency, whilst the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry was an unit for service in the State.

In the last Great War, the Sardar Rissala was one of the first units to leave India for the front in France, so that when war in Europe again became an actual fact, it was thought at Jodhpur that it was more than likely that a demand would soon be received for the services of the regiment.

It was decided, therefore, that the Sardar Rissala should commence intensive training, and the regiment proceeded to camp at Surpura, some 6 miles from Jodhpur, for this purpose. His Highness himself went into camp with the regiment, and took a personal interest in its training.

Three officers of the Indian Army arrived at Jodhpur early in September for attachment to the Sardar Rissala—Lt.-Colonel G. G. Collyns, 3rd Cavalry, Captain A. G. S. Alexander, Central India Horse, and Captain G. D. G. Garforth Bles, Guides Cavalry. These officers were designaed Special Service Officers, and their duties were purely advisory.

The Sardar Rissala remained in camp for one month and then returned to Jodhpur. There was much disappointment that no news

was forthcoming regarding the early employment of the regiment outside the State. Consequently, His Highness sent Brigadier Duncan to G.H.Q. at New Delhi with a letter expressing the hope that his cavalry regiment should again be employed on field service.

Brigadier Duncan was told at Delhi, that at that time, there was no idea of employing the regiment outside the State, but that if an opportunity presented itself later, it would certainly be considered. And with that disappointing information, Brigadier Duncan returned to Jodhpur to report to His Highness.

However, this disappointment was not to last for long, for early in November 1939, warning orders were received for the Jodhpur Sardar Rissala to be prepared to leave the State within six weeks time to join the 1st Indian Cavalry Brigade at Risalpur on the North West Frontier of India.

There was great rejoicing in the regiment at this welcome news. Preparations for the move were put in hand at once. There was much to do and much to arrange, because, except for a period of a few weeks during the winters of 1937 and 1938, when the regiment carried out regimental and brigade training with the Meerut Cavalry Brigade, it had not left the State since it returned to Jodhpur in February, 1920, from Aleppo after the conclusion of the Great War.

The Jodhpur Sardar Rissala had then been away for nearly five and a half years. During that long period of absence, it had served in France for more than three years, spending

much of the time in the trenches and taking part in the bitter fighting on the Western Front. It had then been transported to Palestine, where it was given back its horses and became a horsed cavalry regiment once again, and where it greatly distinguished itself, particularly in the historic charge at Haifa. Even when the war came to an end, it did not return to Jodhpur at once, but was kept as part of the Army of Occupation for over a year.

Now, once again, the Jodhpur Sardar Rissala was to serve outside the State along side the Crown Forces and, it was hoped, to proceed on field service. Once more was it to be given the opportunity of not only proving its worth, but of even enhancing the splendid name it had made for itself under General His Highness Maharaja Sir Pratap Singh in France and Palestine in the War of 1914-18, and previous to that in China in 1900.

What did the future hold in store for the regiment? What adventures lay ahead? That was in the minds of all officers and men of the unit, as they made their preparations for the move outside the State during November 1939. Would it be a matter of months or years before the regiment returned to Jodhpur? If anyone had hazarded a guess, it is more than probable he would have been wrong, for few realised at that time the immensity of the struggle and the many years of suffering and misery for mankind throughout the world before final victory was achieved.

From now on in this history of the Jodhpur State Forces in this war, the regiment will be

referred to as the Jodhpur Lancers and not the Jodhpur Sardar Rissala, although the name of the regiment was not actually changed until about a year after it had left Jodhpur.

Little mention has so far been made of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry. The role of that battalion at the commencement of war was for service in the State. It was hoped, however, that it could be usefully employed outside the State, and His Highness immediately offered it for any duty, for which it might be required. As will be seen later on in this book, the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry was not to be left very long at Jodhpur, and the story of its adventures during the years to come make good reading.

This book is an attempt to give a true picture of the Jodhpur State Forces during the Second World War. It shows how this small State army was expanded more than four times its pre-war strength, an expansion as great as, even if not more than, in any other State in India. It recounts that the Jodhpur Lancers was the first Indian State cavalry or infantry unit to leave its State to join an Indian Army formation, and was the first State cavalry regiment to be selected for mechanisation, whilst the men of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry were the first Indian troops to land on the mainland of Italy at Salerno. It is a story of great endeavour and much hard work, of heavy expenditure by His Highness and his Government, of loyalty, devotion to duty, and self sacrifice, of great difficulties met with and overcome. It is a proud record.

CHAPTER I.

Headquarters, Jodhpur State Forces.

WHEN the storm clouds of war were gathering over Europe during the Summer of 1939, Brigadier R. C. Duncan, Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, was on 3 months leave in England, and Lt.-Colonel Rao Bahadur Rao Raja Sujan Singh was officiating for him at Headquarters, Jodhpur State Forces. Towards the end of August, war appeared inevitable, so Brigadier Duncan applied to the India Office for a return passage to India, and he sailed from Greenock for India on September 3rd, 1939, the day war was declared, in the "S.S. Britannic", which was one of the many ships of the first convoy to leave England during the war. Over 1500 officers travelled in the "Britannic" amongst whom was Major Jeff Alexander, who, on arrival, joined the Jodhpur Lancers as Special Service Officer. This is not the place to tell the story of that first convoy, which had a strong escort consisting of a battle-ship and eight destroyers, one of which is believed to have sunk the first German submarine, which appeared suddenly in the middle of the convoy.

While Brigadier Duncan was on leave in England, a sad tragedy occurred at Jodhpur in the death of his Personal Assistant, Mr. Devi Dayal, in a motor car accident. The death of

Mr. Devi Dayal was a great loss to the Headquarters office, as he was an exceptionally efficient and hard working Personal Assistant.

Mr. Rajhansa officiated as Personal Assistant for some months until Mr. Shree Krishna Tripathi was appointed on 23rd October, 1939. Great credit is due to Mr. Rajhansa, who had not been long at the Headquarters office, and who, until the appointment of Mr. Shree Krishna had to carry on the duties of Personal Assistant to the Commandant in addition to those of Head Clerk.

Although there was no immediate expansion of the Jodhpur State Forces on the outbreak of war, nor was there to be for some months, there was, of course, some increase in the volume of work at the Headquarters office, and this increase was more noticeable after orders had been received for the move of the Jodhpur Lancers for service outside the State.

Mr. Shree Krishna, the new Personal Assistant, who had been employed in the Electrical Department and had no knowledge whatsoever of the work in the Military Department, was completely at sea for some time, but he buckled to, and gradually learnt the work, which started to increase in earnest some six months after the outbreak of war.

From then on, the work went on increasing and increasing, and the comparatively small staff of clerks at the Headquarters office had great difficulty in keeping pace with it. A few extra clerks were taken on, but they lacked experience and any knowledge of the work required, and there was no time to teach them,

In the Autumn of 1940, the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry had left the State but there was much correspondence in connection with the battalion, and their Training Company at Jodhpur, the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry was being raised, and, in addition, No. 54 (Jodhpur) General Purposes Transport Company, R.I.A.S.C., was also being raised at Jodhpur, which necessitated endless correspondence and extra work. Recruiting was at its peak. Those were grim days indeed for the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, his Personal Assistant, and the clerical establishment at the Headquarters office. Work was unceasing, and Sunday was a day of work like any week day.

By the end of January 1941, it was thought that the excessive work at the Headquarters office would ease down to some extent, as the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry had left the State on November 1st, 1940, No. 54 (Jodhpur) General Purposes Transport Company had been completely raised and was standing by for movement orders, and the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry was at full strength and had settled down to normal duties. However, this was not to be the case, for in February 1941 orders were received for the mechanisation of the Jodhpur Lancers and Jodhpur Lancers Training Squadron.

As no facilities existed in the Jodhpur Lancers barracks for a mechanised unit, and as neither the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, nor the Commandant, Jodhpur Lancers Training Squadron, knew anything about mechanisation, it was expected that the Jodhpur Lancers Training Squadron would be sent to the Armoured Training Centre, Ferozepore, where all facilities

existed. Brigadier Duncan was asked to go to G.H.Q. to discuss matters in connection with the mechanisation of the regiment and the Training Squadron, and he was told there that there was no room at the Armoured Training Centre, Ferozepore, which was already overcrowded, so that the Jodhpur Lancers Training Squadron must remain at Jodhpur, and carry out its training there.

The reorganisation of the Jodhpur Lancers Training Squadron, to be known later as the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre, on a mechanised basis meant a considerable amount of extra work to the Headquarters office, which will be recorded in the account of the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre. In addition, the raising of the Jodhpur Bodyguard Squadron on 16th May, 1941, was an additional burden to an already overworked clerical establishment at Headquarters.

It was early in March 1941 that Brigadier Duncan, Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, went down with pneumonia. While he was in hospital, he realised the necessity of his having at least one staff officer in addition to his Personal Assistant. Until now, there was no suitable officer available without taking away an officer from one of the field service units, which were themselves rather short of well educated and experienced State officers, who had a fairly good knowledge of English. However, an opportunity presented itself then, in that Lt.-Colonel Sujān Singh had been in command of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry for a number of years and was due for relief. Accordingly Lt.-Colonel Rao Rājā Sujān Singh was appointed



Major General R. C. Duncan, C. I. E., M. V. O., O. B. E., Commandant,
Jodhpur State Forces, throughout the War, and Honorary
Colonel of the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry.

General Staff Officer, while Mr. Shree Krishna Tripathi, the Personal Assistant to the Commandant, was appointed Staff Captain with the Honorary rank of Captain.

Brigadier Duncan was not long away from the Headquarters office, for after 8 days in hospital and 8 days at Mount Abu to recuperate, he returned to duty. Possibly it would have been wiser for him to have stayed away a bit longer to recuperate, but there was so much work in the office and so many decisions to make and actions to take, that he found it necessary to return to work.

All through 1941 and 1942, there was a tremendous amount of work to be carried out in the Headquarters office. Mr. Rajhansa, the Head Clerk, and the whole of the clerical establishment were hard put to it to keep pace with the volume of correspondence. Hardly a clerk got any leave at all, even for a few days and Sunday was usually a day of work. State Gazetted religious holidays, which number 30 days, and which were enjoyed by the civil offices at Jodhpur, were cut down to six days in the year, and they remained that number until the end of the war. It was found quite impossible to grant the usual Jodhpur Gazetted holidays to the clerical establishment at the Headquarters office if the necessary correspondence was to be dealt with. However, all the clerks carried on with their hard duties willingly and without any grumbling, and the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, wishes to place on record here his appreciation of the splendid way his clerks carried out their tasks during all those difficult years of war.

A Liaison Branch at Headquarters, Jodhpur State Forces, was created in 1943, and a Chief Liaison Officer was appointed, but this Branch is being dealt with separately in this book.

In July 1943, Brigadier Duncan went on tour overseas to visit the 7 companies of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry in Algeria just before they embarked with the 5th Army for the invasion of Italy. He also stayed at Cairo to see Bn. H. Q., which had been left behind in Egypt. From Egypt, he flew to Iraq to visit No. 54 (Jodhpur) General Purposes Transport Company, R.I.A.S.C., at Kirkuk. He carried out the whole tour by air, travelling over 10,000 miles, and he was away from Jodhpur for approximately six weeks. During his absence, Lt.-Colonel Rao Raja Sujjan Singh officiated for him.

As there were many cases of distress amongst dependents of soldiers, who had died, and of ex-soldiers, who were not in receipt of a pension, Lt.-Colonel Shyam Singh, Chief Liaison Officer, suggested to Brigadier Duncan that a Jodhpur State Forces Benevolent Fund should be started to help these people. All units were consulted on the subject and they fully approved of it, and agreed to a voluntary donation from every man of one anna in the rupee from one month's pay to start the Fund, and His Highness was pleased to donate Rs. 5000 annually to the Fund. Many deserving cases, who were living in great difficulties, have been helped by the creation of this Benevolent Fund.

The designation of the appointment held by Mr. Rajhansa was changed from Head Clerk to Office Controller on March 1st, 1944.



Lieut.-Colonel Rao Bahadur Rao Raja Sujan Singh,
who was Officer Commanding, Jodhpur Sardar
Infantry, on the out break of war, and
was later appointed to be General
Staff Officer, Headquarters,
Jodhpur State Forces.

Brigadier Duncan went on leave to England in the middle of July 1944 and returned in January 1945. During his absence, Lt.-Colonel Rao Raja Sujan Singh officiated as Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces.

There is not much more to say about the Headquarters, Jodhpur State Forces. Although, no more units were raised after the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry, the work at the Headquarters office went on unceasingly. The period 1940 until the end of 1942 was certainly the busiest time in the office, but even after that, the work did not decrease to any appreciable extent.

There seemed to be perpetual changes in establishment for our units serving outside the State and the two Training Centres, resulting in much work in connection with pay and allowances, endless correspondence to and from the Military Adviser, Rajputana States Forces—in fact, the longer the war lasted, so did the official correspondence tend to increase accordingly.

During the war, several distinguished persons visited Jodhpur and inspected the two Training Centres, the most notable being His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester in July 1942 and General Sir Claude Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief in India in February, 1945, both of whom carried out detailed inspections lasting several hours. Throughout the inspection by His Royal Highness, it rained heavily. However, this did not prevent him from carrying out a very thorough inspection, and he even refused to wear a macintosh while seeing the

CHAPTER II.

The Jodhpur Lancers.

PART I.

THE Jodhpur Lancers left Jodhpur in six special trains on January 4th, 5th, and 6th, 1940, two trains leaving each day. At Bhatinda the troops detrained with their horses and baggage, and were conveyed from there in three special trains over the broad gauge line to Risalpur, where they arrived on January 6th, 7th, and 8th.

The journey to Risalpur was without incident, except that at Bhatinda, it was discovered that there was a stowaway in the train in the person of the father of one of the subalterns. He remained as a sort of honorary member of the regiment for some time.

It was the first cavalry or infantry unit of the Indian States Forces to be selected for service with the Crown Forces in the war.

The following officers were with the regiment.

STATE OFFICERS.

Lt.-Colonel Bahadur Singh Officer

Commanding

Major K. Shyam Singh . . 2nd-in-Command.

Captain K. Arjun Singh.

Captain K. Surajbhan Singh.

Captain Kalyan Singh.

Lieut. K. Keshri Singh .. Quartermaster
Lieut. Sultan Singh .. Adjutant.
Lieut. Chandan Singh.
Lieut. Th. Jagat Singh.
Lieut. Dhonkal Singh.
Lieut. Bhopal Singh.
Lieut. K. Sardar Singh.
Lieut. K. Mohan Singh.
2nd.-Lieut. Ramdan Singh.
2nd.-Lieut. Prem Singh.
2nd.-Lieut. Mod Singh.
2nd.-Lieut. Kheem Singh.

MEDICAL OFFICER.

2nd.-Lieut. Tej Singh.

STATE OFFICER CADETS.

Pirthi Singh.
Jabdi Khan.

SPECIAL SERVICE OFFICERS.

Lt.-Colonel G.G. Collyns, 3rd Cavalry.
Major W.H.L. Spurgin, 19th K.G.O. Lancers.
Major A.G.S. Alexander, Central India Horse.
Captain G.D.G. Garforth-Bles, Guides Cavalry.

INDIAN OFFICERS.

Risaldar-Major Chhog Singh.
Risaldar Amar Singh.
Risaldar Madan Singh.
Risaldar Sher Singh.
Risaldar Bhopal Singh.
Risaldar Girdhari Singh.

Jemadar Nathu Singh.
 Jemadar Sukan Singh.
 Jemadar Anop Singh.
 Jemadar Sadul Singh.
 Jemadar Mangal Singh.
 Jemadar Madho Singh.
 Jemadar Bherun Singh.
 Jemadar Shambhu Singh.
 Jemadar Jai Singh.
 Jemadar Gulab Singh.
 Jemadar Amar Singh.
 Jemadar Jorawar Khan.

The total strength of the regiment was 17 State Officers, 2 State Officer Cadets, 21 Indian Officers, 486 Indian Other Ranks, 383 followers, and 521 horses.

The Training Squadron, which had been left behind at Jodhpur, was under the command of Captain Thakur Zabar Singh, with Lieut. Mangal Singh as Adjutant, and consisted of 5 Indian Officers, 134 Indian Other Ranks, 10 Followers, and 134 horses.

The Regiment was accommodated in the barracks, which had been vacated by the British Cavalry regiment—the 16th/5th Lancers, and which had been converted for use by Indian troops. The British Cavalry Mess was taken over for the State Officers.

Brigadier A. A. E. Filose, Commander, 1st Indian Cavalry Brigade, visited the regiment on January 9th and was introduced to the State and Indian officers, and went round the Lines.



Lieut.-Colonel Bahadur Singh, Bahadur, O. B. I., Officer Commanding,
Jodhpur Lancers at the out break of War until July 15th, 1941,

During the course of the next fortnight, the regiment received visits from General Sir John Coleridge, G.O.C.-in-Chief, Northern Command, Lieut. General Sir Bertrand Moberly, Quarter-master General-in-India, and Brigadier H.T.D. Hickman, officiating-in-command of the Peshawar District, during which the men and horses were inspected. A Station Board was assembled to survey clothing and equipment, and 41 horses were taken over from the 16th/5th Lancers to complete establishment.

By the end of January 1940, it could be said that the regiment had settled down in its new surroundings, and training, with particular reference to the North West Frontier, was well under way.

Several inter-squadron and inter-regimental exercises with Probyn's Horse were carried out during February, and the regiment took part in a 1st Cavalry Brigade Training march from March 17th—19th on light scale, during which night operations, river crossings, etc., were practised.

The regimental polo ponies were put into strict training, for several good polo grounds existed at Risalpur and there was no dearth of polo players amongst the cavalry regiments stationed there. More will be read later of the exploits of the regimental polo team, which distinguished itself by winning many tournaments at Risalpur and Peshawar during the stay of the regiment in those parts.

Officers took part in Brigade reconnaissances of the Mohmand and Utman Khel areas at various

times, and made themselves acquainted with the wild borderland beyond which the King's writ does not run, where every man is a warrior, every large house a fortress, and every family and clan has its feud.

Mention was made in the opening chapter of this book that the Jodhpur Lancers had carried out regimental and brigade training with the Meerut Cavalry Brigade during the winters of 1937 and 1938. This had been privately arranged by Brigadier Duncan with Brigadier J. Lumley, Commander of the Meerut Cavalry Brigade, and with the approval of His Highness. The entire cost of transporting the regiment to the manoeuvre area and all incidental expenses, amounting to approximately Rs. 36,000 each time, had been borne by Jodhpur State. The difficulties and disadvantages of a regiment carrying out training on its own and not in conjunction and in competition with other regiments had been realised. Until then, the Jodhpur Lancers saw no other troops except the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry from year in to year out. Those few weeks of training with British Service and Indian Army regiments, and the help and advice given by Brigadier Lumley and his Staff during those periods of training were invaluable, and the benefits that had been gained were borne out by the good reports received from the Commander, 1st Cavalry Brigade, on the general training of the unit when it joined his brigade. Indeed, it is more than possible that the fact that the regiment had carried out regimental and brigade training with a formation of the Army in India for two winters previous to the outbreak of war, and had been well reported on by the brigade commander, may have had a great deal

towards the regiment being the first cavalry or infantry unit of the Indian States Forces to be chosen for service alongside the Crown Forces in the war.

His Highness arrived at Risalpur early in July to attend a R.A.F. "F.T.S. Cadets" course, which lasted ten weeks until the end of September.

It was well known how much His Highness had done for civil aviation in India. The Jodhpur Aerodrome was one of the best in India, and many people had learnt to fly at the Jodhpur Flying Club, which was started by His Highness, and to which he donated large sums of money.

His Highness was already an experienced pilot and had got his "A" license. He had flown several types of machines, including twin-engined planes, such as the Lockheed, etc., from the very inception of flying in India, and had piloted his plane on many long distance flights.

It was, therefore, a splendid effort on his part to apply to attend this ten weeks Cadets course, and he did it partly to encourage Indian boys to join the Indian Air Force as cadets, and also to obtain his "Wings".

He insisted on being treated the same as any of the other cadets, and he used to bicycle to and from work every day instead of using one of his cars. The work on the course was hard, and included night flying, but His Highness was keenly interested in it all, and he passed the course with the greatest credit.

While attending the course, His Highness flew over tribal territory several times, but this was not the first occasion he had done so, for he took part in an aerial reconnaissance over tribal territory some years before the outbreak of the war.

It can be understood how pleased all ranks of the Jodhpur Lancers were to have their Ruler at Risalpur with them at that time, and the keen interest he took in the course and the hard work carried out while on it, did much to encourage morale in the regiment.

During his stay at Risalpur, His Highness had with him Colonel Maharaj Ajit Singh, and Lt.-Colonel Rao Bahadur Rao Raja Hanut Singh, his personal Military Secretary, who had accompanied his father, General Maharaja Sir Pratap Singh, to France in 1914, and had served with the Jodhpur Lancers in France and Palestine from 1914-18.

One fact that is well worth noting in this record, and which will go to show the spirit in the regiment, was that, soon after the arrival of the regiment at Risalpur, every man in the regiment, except the farrier daffadar, voluntarily gave up smoking, so that there would be no chance of anyone coughing when out on patrol.

Lt.-Colonel Bahadur Singh was very popular with all ranks and he, undoubtedly, had a flair for handling troops in the field. His English, however, was limited, and it provided some popular by-words in the brigade, the best of which was his almost inevitable opening gambit when asked for his appreciation and

plan during a brigade exercise—"Sir, I will not lay my egg in one basket." He was also a very superstitious man, and, once, one early morning, when Squire Collyns and Jeff Alexander were travelling with him in a Ford vanette to a brigade T.E.W.T.,—Colonel Bahadur in front with the driver and Collyns and Alexander behind,—the car dashed off the road, narrowly avoiding some large trees, bounced over a ditch, and then back through some more trees on to the road. Collyns and Alexander loudly protested from behind, but all the comfort they got from Colonel Bahadur was, "there was a donkey on the road, must pass donkey on the left first thing in the morning"!

In July, the regiment took part in a Northern Command "air defence" exercise, during which it manned the posts allotted to it in accordance with 1 Cavbde A.R.P. Scheme, and, later, all officers attended some R.A.F. Demonstrations of an attack on an aerodrome by bombers and parachute troops at Peshawar.

The following month Brigadier R. C. Duncan came to Risalpur for three days to visit the regiment and also to discuss with His Highness various matters in connection with the raising of more units in Jodhpur and to inform him of the possibility of his being recalled to take up an appointment at G.H.Q. India.

104 horses were received from Probyn's Horse to replace a number of horses of the regiment which required to be cast. After receiving these horses, and having got earlier a number of horses from the 16/5th Lancers and Skinner's Horse, all of which were specially selected, the regiment

was splendidly mounted—indeed, it would be no exaggeration to say that it was probably the best mounted cavalry regiment that had been in India for some years.

Colonel Collyns and David Garforth-Bles and his wife were keen members of the Peshawar Vale Hunt. One morning, the latter were motoring to a meet near Peshawar, and they passed an overturned and apparently deserted motor car with a pair of boots protruding from the window. There was a shout from David's orderly, "stop, Sahib, that is the Colonel Sahib's car." On investigation they found this to be true, and, what was more, Squire Collyns' feet and legs were inside the boots. Mercifully, he and his passengers were little the worse.

Early in October, warning orders were received for the regiment to move to Delhi, but these orders were later cancelled.

Squadrons moved to training camps at Toru and Lahore in rotation for one month's squadron training during November and December, and early in December, Brigadier Duncan again visited the regiment.

At the end of December 1940, the brigade Commander decided to carry out an exercise involving the crossing of the Kabul river near Abazai. The river was reached at first light on a cold morning,—the water was icy and flowing fast. The O.C. Probyn's Horse, ambitiously attempted to send his L.M.G. troop across first, complete with kit and equipment. The temperature and the flow of the water had been underestimated, and the leading section

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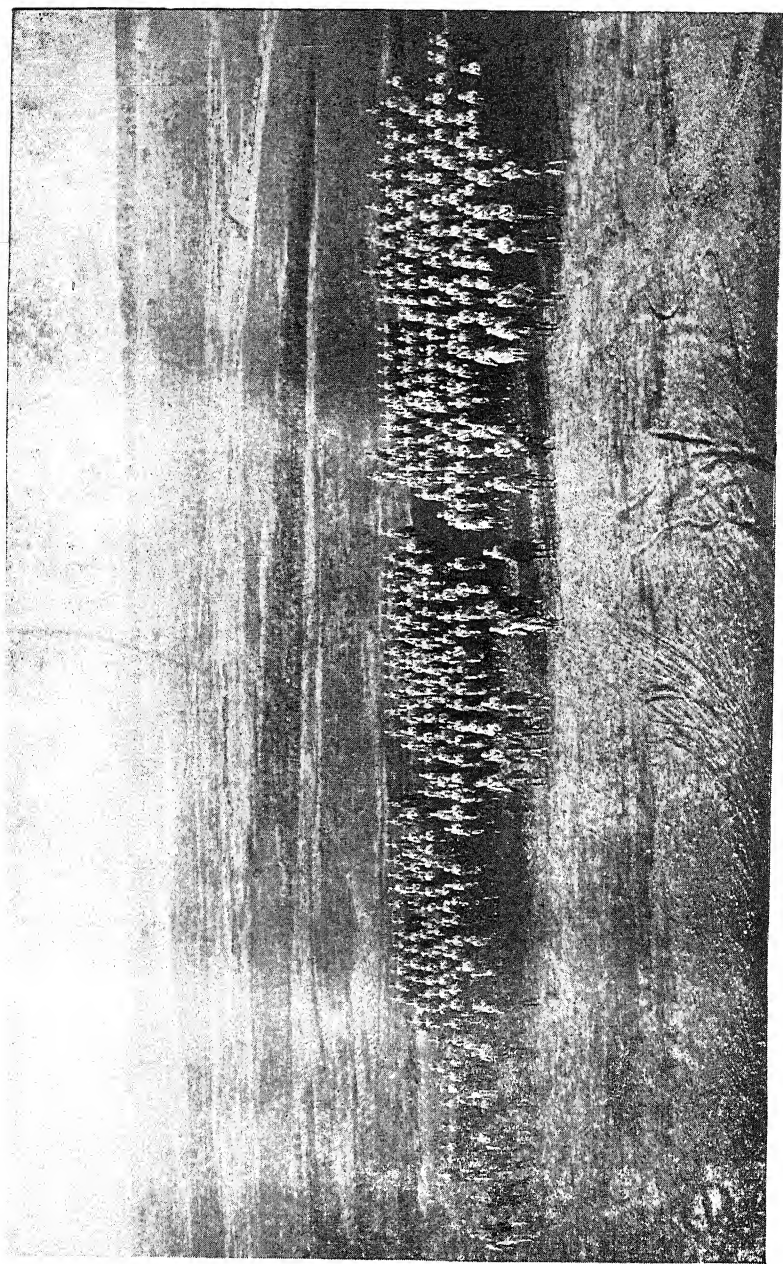
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The last parade of the Jodhpur Lancers as a horsed unit prior to mechanisation at Risalpur early in 1941.

were carried downstream—three horses were drowned, and the men only saved by artificial respiration. The Jodhpur Lancers were some way back in a village. Probyn's Horse got every man and horse across, which was a creditable performance, the Royal Deccan Horse were not so lucky, though they did not lose any horses. The Brigade Commander then realised it was too risky for the Jodhpur Lancers to attempt the crossing, so he decided to order them to cross by the bridge.

~~Major A.C.S. Alexander~~ left the regiment with which he had been a Special Service Officer since the outbreak of war, in January to take up the appointment of Military Assistant to His Excellency The Commander-in-Chief. Everyone regretted his departure, as he was most popular with all ranks of the regiment and had been most helpful in every way.

From February 3rd—7th the regiment took part in a 1st Armoured Brigade Air Defence exercise.

This was followed very shortly by the receipt of a notification on February 10th, 1941, that the Governor-General in Council had selected the regiment for mechanisation as an Indian Motor Regiment. The news came as a complete surprise, as no word of this had leaked out beforehand.

This meant, of course, a complete reorganisation of the regiment and an entirely new system of training. Now, all officers, and Indian Other Ranks had to be taught to drive a vehicle and look after it, and none but a few officers knew

anything about them. There was much to do and much to learn, and although all ranks hated giving up their horses, which they loved so well, they got down to this new training cheerfully and put all they knew into it.

During March and April 1941, several officers and N.C.Os. were attached to the Royal Deccan Horse at Mardan or the 13th Lancers at Risalpur for short courses in driving and maintenance, while some I.O.Rs were sent for training with the 8th Cavalry at Kohat, and others to the 19th Lancers at Sialkot.

22 civilian lorries and thirteen 30 Cwt. Albion lorries from Quetta arsenal were received early in May for training purposes, and with these the regiment settled down to mechanised training in earnest.

On July 7th, orders were received for the appointment of Lt.-Colonel G. G. Collyns, 3rd Cavalry, who until now had been a Special Service Officer, to the command of the Jodhpur Lancers in relief of Lt.-Colonel Bahadur Singh, who had nearly ~~completed the full term of his~~ command, and who was granted three months leave pending retirement. Lt.-Colonel Bahadur Singh had been appointed to command the Jodhpur Lancers in September 1936 on the death of Lt.-Colonel Thakur Pirthi Singh of Bera. He had carried out his duties well, and commanded the regiment during Meerut Cavalry Brigade training with success. However, as he had nearly completed the full period of his command, it was thought wiser to hand over the command to Lt.-Colonel Collyns from the commencement of its mechanisation.

Towards the end of July, Brigadier Duncan again travelled up from Jodhpur to visit the regiment and discuss matters with Lt.-Colonel Collyns. It was intensely hot, but he was taken round all parades and he was able to see that the mechanising of the regiment was progressing well despite many difficulties, the main one being a shortage of vehicles and equipment.

During his visit, His Excellency General Sir Archibald Wavell, (later Lord Wavell, Viceroy of India), the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief in India inspected the regiment. ~~Sir Archibald Wavell had recently returned from the Middle East, where his victories over the Italians had gained him a world-wide reputation as a military leader. Despite the great strain he had been through while Commander-in-Chief in the Middle East during that critical period of the war, which would have tired out the ordinary man and necessitated a rest, and despite the great heat in the plains of India at that time, Sir Archibald Wavell carried out a detailed tour of the North West Frontier within ten days of his arrival in India, visiting nearly all the Frontier stations, inspecting troops, and showing the greatest interest in all he saw. A remarkable achievement.~~

All through the hot weather of 1941, the process of mechanisation and the training of all ranks in the methods of a light armoured regiment went on. Many officers and N.C.Os attended courses at the Fighting Vehicles School and elsewhere. Major General T. W. Corbett, Commander of the 1st Armoured Division, inspected the regiment at the end of August, and saw D.& M., armament, L.M.G., motor mechanics, and signallers' classes.

Captain David Garforth-Bles, Guides Cavalry, who had been a Special Service Officer since the beginning of the war, left on transfer to the Indian Armoured Corps Training Centre, and was relieved by Captain J. B. Hampson, 10/12th Frontier Force Regiment.

Early in October 1941, warning orders were received for the move of the regiment to Secunderabad to join the 18th Indian Division as its Divisional Reconnaissance regiment, and on October 18th, its training vehicles, motor cycles, etc. were handed over to the advance party of the 25th Dragoons.

The Regiment left Risalpur on October 20th, 1941, in two special trains and it arrived at Trimulgherry, Secunderabad, on October 25th, and was accommodated in Gough Barracks.

The Jodhpur Lancers had been at Risalpur nearly twenty months and had thoroughly enjoyed its stay there. Its association with other units of the British Service and Indian Army, and the opportunity it had afforded of working in co-operation with other regiments and in an armoured formation, had been of the greatest benefit to all ranks of the regiment. On the social side, the officers had most certainly held their own, and had entertained largely and had been entertained. Several dances had been held in their beautiful mess, and these had been greatly enjoyed by the large number of people who came to them. Many friendships were made, and from all sides came reports of how popular the regiment was there. The regimental polo team particularly distinguished itself.

In September 1941, a team composed of Risaldar Hanut Singh 1, Captain Jagat Singh 2, Lieut. Prem Singh 3, and Captain Griffith R.E. Back, won the Mardan tournament beating the 16th Cavalry and Royal Deccan Horse in the first two rounds, and Probyn's Horse in the final by the narrow margin of half a goal. Maharaj Kishen Singh, who had been a famous polo player in his day, and who was the father of Lieut. Prem Singh, was at Risalpur at the time and gave much help by coaching the team.

The Regimental team, composed of Lieut. Prem Singh, Captain Jagat Singh, Lieut. Sardar Singh, and Risaldar Hanut Singh, won the Peshawar Christmas tournament 1941, beating the Royal Deccan Horse in the final by 3 goals. This was followed by a six chukka tournament at Peshawar, in which the Regimental team again won, beating the 16th Cavalry in the final after a tremendous tussle. The score was all square when the bugle went, but, after further play with widened goals, the regimental team scored.

During the time the regiment was at Risalpur the following officers played for the regimental polo team:—Lieut. Prem Singh, Captain Mohan Singh, Captain Jagat Singh, Lieut. Sardar Singh, and Risaldar Hanut Singh.

The journey by rail from Risalpur to Secunderabad, where the Regiment arrived on October 25th, 1941, lasted for 5 days and everyone was heartily glad to say "Good-bye" to the special train by the end of it. Unfortunately, "Diwali" happened to fall during the period occupied by the journey, and, although this festival could not, of course, be allowed to pass by totally uncelebrated, the full rites befitting the occasion could by no means be observed,

At Secunderabad, the Regiment (now Divisional Reconnaissance Regiment to the 18th Indian Division) occupied Gough Barracks (British Infantry) at Trimulgherry, pending the departure of the Poona Horse, who were in Haig Lines, Bolarum, for overseas. It was not until November 25th, 1941, that the Regiment moved into Haig Lines, owing to the departure of the Poona Horse being unexpectedly delayed.

Meanwhile, Major General Smyth, V.C., M.C., Commanding the 18th (later renumbered the 19th) Indian Division, lost no time in getting to know the Regiment both on and off parade. He and his wife were also frequent spectators at Polo, which in those days was played on the Haig ground at Bolarum; the players apart from those provided by the Regiment, coming mainly from the Poona Horse and the Cameronians, which battalion shortly afterwards gave such a good account of itself in Burma.

The Division was still in the most embryonic stage of its formation, and General Smyth held a series of T. Es. W.T. for all officers, at which problems applicable to all arms included in the make-up of the Division were set. The Regiment also took part in several tactical exercises arranged by one or other of the Infantry Brigades of the Division, although, owing to the slowness with which vehicles were issued to the Regiment, it was impossible to put more than one Squadron into the field at a time. This delay in the issue of vehicles and also of weapons was a serious handicap to the training of the Regiment for some time to come.

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its polo activities to Hyderabad, where the officers of the Hyderabad State Forces were still playing regularly. Not long afterwards, however, it became apparent that unless all horses still with the regiment, were dispatched to Jodhpur forthwith, it might never be possible for them to return there owing to forthcoming restrictions on the movement of animals by rail. Consequently, the forty odd polo ponies and one charger per officer, which the officers of the Regiment still had with them, were sent off to Jodhpur and the Regiment's association with horses, as opposed to horse power, finally came to an end.

At about this time, too, General Smyth left the 19th Division at a moment's notice to take over command of the 17th Division from Major General Lewis, the 17th Division having been ordered to Burma, and General Lewis, having been found temporarily medically unfit, replaced General Smyth in the 19th Division, in which the Regiment was serving.

Not long after this change of command, things were fairly set humming by a report that a Japanese invasion fleet was heading for Madras, and the 19th Division was ordered to Rajahmundry at short notice. To the great regret of all ranks, the only portion of the Regiment able to accompany the Division, were 3 armoured carriers and their crews (as the Divisional Commander's personal escort), owing to the delay in the supply of vehicles referred to above. Major Sultan Singh also accompanied Divisional Headquarters as a liaison officer, and while so employed, had a "grand-stand" view of the bombing of Coconada by two enemy aircraft.

The report of an imminent Jap invasion later proved to be unfounded, but the Division (now commanded by Major General Scoones) remained in its new locations, and practically all chances for the Regiment to train with other arms came to an end for the time being.

The next development was the news that the Regiment was to cease to be a member of the 19th Division and to come under the command of the General Officer Commanding, 20th Indian Division, and that the Regiment, except for one squadron, which was bound for Trichinopoly, was to be located in the Attur Area. Following this news, the carrier escort, which had accompanied H.Q., 19th Division, to the Rajahmundry area, returned to Bolarum, as also did Major Sultan Singh.

Meanwhile, at last, a considerable number of armoured carriers had reached the Regiment, and also its full "interim" scale of anti-tank Rifles and bren guns. The above mentioned carriers were all gifts to the Government of India by various well known firms or public bodies (including the Bengal Police), and letters of thanks to all these donors were sent by the C.O., on behalf of the Regiment. The Inspector General of Police, wrote in reply to Lt.-Colonel Collyns thanking him for his letter and saying that he thought it particularly appropriate that the 7 carriers given by the Bengal Police should have been received by a unit which he (Lt. Colonel Collyns) was commanding since Lt. Colonel Collyns had at one time served with the Eastern Frontier Rifles (Bengal Military Police Battalion) in 1922-23,

Yet another transfer of the Regiment from one formation to another occurred before it left Bolarum for the Attur and Trichinopoly areas, i.e. from the 20th Indian Division to Headquarters, Madras District. These moves to the new areas were carried out in the early part of July, 1942 by special trains—"A" squadron (accompanied by Major W.H.L. Spurgin) occupying a standing camp on the Tanjore Road near Trichinopoly, and the rest of the Regiment, after detraining at Salem, going into another standing camp at Chinna Salem,—a few miles beyond Attur.

On the day that the main body left Secunderabad for Salem, Brigadier Pickering, M.C., Commanding, Secunderabad Area, who had always been a very good friend of the Regiment, came down to the station to see it off—an action that was very much appreciated.

The standing camp at Chinna Salem was situated in a tamarind grove on the very edge of that village and could hardly be considered a pleasant site for a camp, largely owing to the very primitive sanitary habits of the local population.

The Regiment's advent, though, appeared to be very popular with the large and ancestral tribe of monkeys, which inhabited the camp along with the Regiment, and the latter lost no time in inspecting the interiors of the tents, etc., whenever their lawful occupants were absent. Indeed, a tale went round the camp that a simian elder had been found ensconced in the C.O's own particular retiring room and making use of his special brand of tissue paper in preference to the Government issue. This is, however, probably apocryphal.

With the formation of the 25th Indian Division (Major General, A.C. Davies, D.S.O., M.C.,—Headquarters, Salem), the Regiment became a part of that Division as its Divisional Reconnaissance Regiment. This change, which occurred in the middle of August 1942, was fortunately the last as far as the Regiment was concerned for a considerable period.

A Japanese invasion was still a very real possibility and the new General Officer Commanding at once decided to supplement the existing system of civil coast defence watchers with constant mechanised patrols furnished by the Regiment. For this purpose, portions of the Regiment located with Regimental Headquarters at Chinna Salem moved out from there to Cuddalore and Porto Novo, while "A" squadron, which was still quartered near Trichinopoly, and now under command of the 53rd Indian Infantry Brigade command was also employed on similar duty in the Negapatam—Tranquebar area. The above measures, however tactically necessary they may have been, prevented the training of the Regiment as a whole, which was additionally disappointing in view of the fact that its armament, both in vehicles and weapons, was by now virtually complete. Further, the constant patrolling ordered on most indifferent roads soon began to play "Old Harry" with the tyres—especially with those of the carriers for which replacements were very hard to come by.

The order that the civil coast watchers aforesaid might be "kept up to the mark", Major Shyam Singh (as Divisional Military Officer,

incharge of coast watching) was detailed by General Davies to maintain constant surprise checks upon them and also upon their reporting system. Thus it came about that on one occasion, by some evil chance, a test message of a truly alarming nature sent from the coast "to all concerned" by Major Shyam Singh was mistaken by the local population for "the real thing," and a great trek from the coast in a similar direction to that taken by the message only narrowly averted.

At the end of November 1942, "C" squadron relieved "A" squadron in the Trichinopoly area, and, in the middle of December, when the constant patrolling policy had been "eased off" a bit, the Regiment took part in an exercise "Minx" sponsored by H.Q., Southern Army and designed to exercise the 25th Division in its war role in case of invasion. This exercise can hardly be said to have been an enjoyable one from the Regiment's point of view, for, in addition to the fact that it rained almost incessantly throughout the 5 days of its duration, no attack was launched by the enemy upon any of the positions held by the Regiment.

Lt.-General A.F.P. Christison, C.B., M.C., was appointed the Corps Commander at the end of February 1943, and the Regiment took part in an exercise "Trump" organised by him and his Staff early in March, in which the 19th and the 25th Divisions were opposed to one another. Whether the Regiment was actually "the best thing there" (as one officer later described it) or not, it may be said that it gave a satisfactory account of itself during the busy time it had, especially in the early stages of the exercise,

when the Jodhpur Lancers was opposed to the 19th Lancers (19th Division Reconnaissance Regiment) during the Advance to Contact of the respective sides.

Major W.W.A. Loring, second-in-command, 48th Cavalry, was appointed to take over from Lt.-Colonel G.G. Collyns, and arrived on April 4th, 1944, at Chinna Salem. Lt.-Colonel Collyns left next day for Poona, and Major Wyndham Spurgin left a few days later. Major R.G. Hanmer, P.A.V.O. Cavalry, was appointed in place of Major Spurgin, and, later, Captain G.H. Hartman was posted on attachment to the Regiment.

At this time, Major Shyam Singh was second-in-command, Captain Dhonkal Singh was adjutant, the squadron leaders were Major Kalyan Singh ("A" Squadron), Major Arjun Singh ("B" Squadron), Major Surajbhan Singh ("C" Squadron), and Major Chandan Singh ("H.Q" Squadron). Major Sultan Singh was liaison officer with Headquarters, 25th Division, commanded by Major General H.L. Davies, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C.

These changes happened to coincide with changes in equipment and vehicles. In place of the old South African Marmon Harrington Armoured Cars, the Regiment was to receive Humber IIIs (with a 15 mm and 7.92 Besa) and Daimlers (with a 2 pr and 7.92 Besa)

The new types of cars were a great improvement on the Marmon Harrington. Much work was, however, required over conversion, both in driving and maintenance, in gunnery and in

wireless. Time was needed in which to train instructors and complete the conversion, but, as usual, time was not available because the Regiment was to take part in a big 33rd Corps exercise, starting early in June.

Before G.H.Q. orders for the provision of a Training Team had been issued, the 19th Lancers near Madras very kindly offered to take on a number of men under instruction on a 3 weeks course. These courses started at once, and the men so trained drove down 18 armoured cars transferred to the Regiment.

At the beginning of May, a 19th Lancers Training Team, under Major R. E. Wigram, came to the Regiment for 3 weeks and did invaluable work.

Brigadier R.C. Duncan, Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, visited the Regiment towards the end of April and stayed for 2 days.

The months of April and May were, therefore, extremely busy. Apart from conversion training, much battle craft training had to be carried out. Major Chandan Singh and Captain Mohan Singh who had recently returned from a battle course supervised this training with much realism and enthusiasm. Officers and men were put through many highly energetic exercises.

The weather was hot and sticky but health was good. In the middle of this period there was very heavy rain for 4 days and this resulted in a very unfortunate accident. A visiting officer's

car had had a stoppage some 80 miles away and had to be recovered. The first recovery detachment sent out failed to locate it, and a second detachment which included the recovery detachment serjeant and a very experienced warrant officer lent by the 44th Indian Armoured Division was sent out. This detachment, in trying to cross a river in flood, got into difficulties and the men were drowned.

Towards the end of May, Major Chandan Singh relieved Major Sultan Singh as liaison officer with H.Q., 25th Division. Major Sultan Singh took over "C" squadron and Major Surajbhan Singh went to "H.Q." squadron. By this time, the Regiment had received about two thirds of its Humbers and Daimlers, and the balance was made up by the old Marmon Harringtons. There had been little opportunity to carry out tactical training.

Exercise "Fog."—The Regiment left Chinna Salem early in June, without any regret, for its concentration area prior to the exercise which took place on the plateau to the East of Bangalore. The arrival in the concentration area was not without incident, for some of the roads were execrable and drivers had by then little experience with their new cars.

The initial tasks given to the Regiment were:—

- (a) to reconnoitre widely on the right flank of the Division.
- (b) to provide one squadron as Advance Guard mobile troops to the leading brigade, the 55th Brigade.



Lt.-Col. G. G. Collyns, 3rd Cavalry, Senior Special Service Officer with the Jodhpur Lancers from the commencement of the War until July 7th, 1941, and then commanded the regiment for nearly 2 years.



Lt.-Col. W. W. A. Loring, 15th Lancers, who commanded the Jodhpur Lancers from April 4th, 1943, to March 20th, 1944.



Lt.-Col. E. J. R. Emtage, 6th Lancers, who commanded the Jodhpur Lancers from December 1st, 1944 until the end of the war.

"B" squadron was allotted to task (b), and the Regiment, less "B" squadron to task (a).

The combined tasks were really too big and all squadrons had a hectic time for the first four days. Except for one sticky patch on the first day, they all did extremely well and, besides gaining much information, made the "enemy" think we were stronger than we really were.

Then followed a long withdrawal towards Bangalore, during which the Regiment captured, amongst others, the second-in-command and adjutant of the opposing Divisional Cavalry Regiment—the Hyderabad Lancers. "A" squadron, under Major Kalyan Singh, had a particularly successful action in which he was deemed by an umpire to have won the D. S. O. The enemy advance was delayed by a complete 12 hours. The last day of the withdrawal saw "B" and "C" squadrons protecting a nodal point, by name Mulbagal. The C.O., returning from a conference at Division H.Q., and dreaming of a bottle of beer, was met by the alarming news of most of the Hyderabad Lancers and an Infantry Brigade having got into Mulbagal. The situation, though somewhat exaggerated, was ticklish, but was saved by aggressive action by "B" and "C" squadrons, and by weary "A" squadron moving rapidly to the sound of the guns to form a reserve. Later, Captain Ramdan Singh, forsaking his duties of Signal Officer, carried out a bold counter-attack to save a vital bridge. Afterwards, whenever things were really difficult, the Divisional Staff spoke of it as being a "proper Mulbagal".

The remaining days of the exercise were quieter, and this was just as well, as officers;

men, and vehicles, all needed some rest and maintenance.

At the end of it, the Regiment was congratulated by the Divisional Commander on its magnificently aggressive spirit. Considering the recent change over to Humbers and Daimlers, driving was extremely good. Many weaknesses came to light to be put right.

Madras.—On return from Exercise "Fog," the Regiment moved to a new camp, some 18 miles out of Madras. As a change it was at first welcome and there were more amenities, but it was a depressing place and very little seemed to go right. The less said of it the better.

Here, Major Shyam Singh left the Regiment to take up a new appointment in the State, looking after the interests of families of men still serving and of those who had gone on pension. Captain Prem Singh also left to take up a job in the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre, where the organisation and work had received many recommendations by inspecting officers.

The Regiment took part in a 33rd Corps wireless exercise in August, in which it had little to do, and in another full scale Corps exercise in which, after a shaky start, it again did well. Highlights of this exercise, "Trump II", were, the C.O. being "killed" the first afternoon (and being brought to life again one and a half hours later), a bridge being blown whilst "B" squadron were still on the far side, a spirited action by "B" squadron against the 70th Divisional Reconnaissance Regiment, Lieut. Prem Singh's 4 days and nights out in the blue controlling patrols, and the excellent wireless intercommunication which never failed,

Lieut. Chhog Singh, who had been doing Quartermaster for some time, left to take up a similar appointment at the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre. He had carried out his duties with remarkable zeal and had been a great asset in the Mess with his stories of Jodhpur history and with his songs.

October and November were black months for the Regiment. Major Hanmer was taken very ill and was away for nearly 2 months. Very bad floods occurred in the middle of October. The river, separating "H.Q." squadron from "B" and "C" squadrons, rose and flooded both camps. As bad luck would have it, about 50 tracked carriers had been drawn just previously and the wheeled carriers, which they replaced, had not been withdrawn. There were also some surplus armoured cars awaiting disposal orders. The large majority of vehicles needed stripping down thoroughly before being fit to be put on the road again.

Besides the work of repairing damage, all ranks had a busy time collecting enormous quantities of Government petrol tins and drums which had been washed down from a Supply Depot further up the river.

Strenuous, though unsuccessful, attempts to block a breached and very large tank were rewarded by an official notification of thanks by the Madras Government.

Captain Cooper, who had replaced Captain Hampson on his reversion to the P.A.V.O. Cavalry, got pneumonia. As a skilled Technical Officer, his absence at this time was a great blow.

Orders came in the middle of November to join the remainder of the 25th Division, who had moved up to the Mysore jungles. Never were orders more gratefully received. The move started on December 1st. Ten minutes before the time, Major Surajbhan Singh saw a good omen and insisted the start should take place at once. It did.

The Mysore Jungle.—Major Kalyan Singh had gone on with an advance party, with orders to pitch tents and to reconnoitre with a view to having grass and bamboo huts later. Most excellent work was done, and the Regiment on arrival was greeted with a nearly completed grass hut camp. The weather and climate were perfect and very soon everyone was enjoying themselves and looking very much better than they had done outside Madras.

The main camp was outside the jungle proper, and each squadron took it in turn to have a camp right in the jungle where jungle lore and other things could be learned. Quite soon "B" squadron took part in a 19th Division exercise as part of the "enemy" force. The C.O. was an umpire and had ample opportunity of seeing the difficulty of using armoured cars in that type of country. Roads, though good at times, were hilly and narrow, and turning the cars always caused a temporary obstruction. All this was quite different to anything we had been accustomed to before.

Meantime, men of other squadrons were getting practice in much dismounted work and we had an opportunity of doing a good deal of firing. The dismounted work proved its value

when Major Sultan Singh, in an inter brigade exercise early in January, commanded a composite squadron, which did extremely well by its aggressive patrolling.

There was good shikar in the jungles and this was much enjoyed by many. Jungle fowl were plentiful in many places.

Christmas provided an opportunity for parties to go up to Ootacamund and see His Highness of Jodhpur's residence, Arranmore Palace, which he, for the period of the war, gave over as an officers' hostel.

The middle of January 1944 saw the Regiment engaged in a 25th Division exercise in that area. Having learned a lesson from the 19th Division exercise, the previous month, armoured cars were kept off the road as much as possible. This did not mean that the Regiment was inactive. Much patrolling was carried out dismounted and in carriers. "A" squadron dug a very good defensive position denying a dangerous flank road, "C" squadron worked almost entirely dismounted and had a very hard time and "B" squadron had an arduous time in patrolling mounted and dismounted.

When the Division advanced, the Regiment provided excellent wireless intercommunication to help out the Divisional Provost. Towards the end, the Regiment had a hair raising night drive along a difficult road which it accomplished with surprisingly few mishaps. The crews of the old tracked carriers in particular did very well.

At the end of the exercise, the Regiment moved, regretfully, to a new location, some 20 miles out of Bangalore. Accommodation was good, but news was bad. Orders had come for the 25th Division to move to the Arakan, where the Japanese had put in a strong attack. After the lessons learned in the Mysore jungle it was apparent that armoured cars would be of little value up there and it was, therefore, decided that the Regiment would not move with the Division. This was a bitter blow, as confidence in the Divisional Commander was great and liaison between the Regiment and Brigades and the Divisional Staff had been very good. The Divisional Commander, General Davies, came personally to express his great regret at having to leave the Regiment behind.

February was spent outside Bangalore, and time was largely taken up in a 100% inspection of vehicles and equipment. Amenities in the camp were good, as were opportunities for games. "Hegarty" retained its popularity, and "Soft Ball" (a form of baseball) was a means of exercising officers and V.C.Os in the afternoons.

His Highness the Maharaja announced his intention of paying the Regiment a visit early in March, and this was looked forward to with much pleasure by all ranks.

One morning towards the end of February, a practice parade for His Highness' visit with all vehicles was being held, when a message was received for the Regiment to make an immediate move. The "immediate" in this case meant 3 hours. As no previous warning had been given this was asking a lot but was accomplished

almost to time. Hopes ran high that the Japs really were going to land somewhere on the coast and enthusiasm was intense. The Regiment came under command of the 19th Division under General T. W. Rees, C.B., D.S.O., and very soon found themselves back outside Madras, not far from their previous camp.

The next ten days were spent in intensive reconnaissances, preparations and liaison with the R.A.F. and Civil. Hopes were still high, but as the days passed with no news of any Jap landings anywhere, it became certain that the threat had been born out of the fevered imagination of some junior Intelligence officer.

His Highness' visit had been cancelled, and as the future movements of the Regiment were uncertain it was not possible to have this put on again. One thing was quite certain, and that was that no one wanted to stay near Madras any longer than was really necessary.

On March 20th, orders came for Lt.-Colonel Loring to take up the appointment of second-in-command of the 255th Indian Tank Brigade and he left a few days later, after handing over to Major R. G. Hanmer. On March 21st, orders were received for the Regiment to go overseas to Paiforce and for as many men as possible to have 28 days leave beforehand. Expectations were again raised, and imagination produced visions of going over to Greece.

No orders were initially received regarding vehicles and equipment to be taken or left behind. When it was known that a virtual re-equipping was to take place in Paiforce it became obvious

that it would be better to return to the last camp outside Bangalore, where the rear party under Major Chandan Singh still was and which was close to the Ordnance Depot. After this was done, the next move was to an atrocious transit camp at Kalyan, outside Bombay, which was still in process of completion on a no cost basis. There, though His Highness the Maharaja was unfortunately prevented from visiting the Regiment, his son and Brigadier R.C. Duncan did so, as did several other officers including the Military Adviser-in-Chief, Indian States Forces' representative, Lt.-Colonel Cradock-Watson, and Colonel Loring. Hardly a man returned late from leave in spite of the usual difficulties of rail travel in war time and finally the Regiment in great heart sailed from Bombay for service overseas.

PART II.

ON May 1st, 1944, the Jodhpur Lancers arrived at transit camp, Colaba, to await orders to embark for service overseas. The period spent in Bombay was one of last minute preparation, collecting stores and repacking equipment which had been hastily bundled together when the regiment left Vadganhallee, where time did not permit thorough arrangements to be made. Colonel W.W.A. Loring, who had handed over command two months previously, took advantage of the stay in Bombay to pay a short visit of farewell. Lt.-Colonel Cradock Watson, Military Adviser for Armoured Fighting Vehicles, Indian States Forces, also visited the regiment on behalf of the Military Adviser-in-Chief, Indian States Forces, to wish them good luck in their new task.

Every effort was made during the period after receiving orders to move overseas to allow all ranks to avail themselves of leave. Practically every one managed to spend three or four weeks in their homes.

The regiment embarked on the "H.T. Ekma" on May 11th, 1944, and left Bombay the following afternoon. Life on boardship was a novel experience for all. Conditions were no worse than on any other troop ship in war time, where space prohibits most types of activity. With the exception of P.T. no parades were carried out other than the daily ship's inspection. The voyage was a short one, for on May 19th, Basra was reached.

On arrival, Lieut. K. Umed Singh, who had proceeded ahead with the advance party, met the

regiment on board where he explained all the arrangements for disembarking and moving out into camp. Disembarkation was carried out in the evening in order to avoid the intense heat of the day. Baggage parties remained on the docks while the remainder of the regiment was transported into camp at Shaiba, some fifteen miles distant, and there, little time was wasted settling into the existing accommodation. By midday the following day all baggage had been brought from the ship and the men had settled down in their new surroundings.

During the morning of May 20th, Lt.-Colonel R.G. Hanmer, received orders to the effect that the Jodhpur Lancers were to relieve the Poona Horse in the Anglo Iranian oilfields and further that one squadron should be made available at the shortest possible notice to relieve "A" squadron of the Poona Horse. The remainder of the week was spent taking over vehicles and equipment from the Base Ordnance Depot, and completing "A" squadron with their equipment in order that they should be ready to move on May 25th.

On May 21st, Lt.-Colonel R. G. Hanmer went to Ahwaz to contact the O.C., Poona Horse, and obtain a general idea of the layout and duties in the area to be taken over, he returned the same evening. On the 24th, he again left to make a detailed tour of the area.

The Anglo-Iranian oilfields extend from a point some fifty miles due East from the North-East Corner of the Persian Gulf over an area approximately 150 miles long in a North Westerly direction. There are five main fields in this area,

The country is hilly throughout with the bare minimum of vegetation and that only in the valleys. Rising in height to about 2000 feet at Gach Saran, the most Southerly field, the whole forms the foot hills of the Persian plateau to the East. Communications are poor, consisting for the greater part of unmettled roads constructed and maintained by the Oil Company and only in and around the oilfields themselves are there oiled roads.

The five main fields are at Masjid-i-Sulaiman in the North, where the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company have their Oilfields Headquarters, Haft Khel, some 50 miles South, Agha Jairi, Pazanun and Gach Saran.

On May 25th, "A" squadron, commanded by Major Kalyan Singh, left Shaiba to relieve "A" squadron, Poona Horse, at Gach Saran. The regiment, less "A" squadron, remained in Shaiba until June 18th. It was busy period collecting vehicles and equipment as the regiment had handed over all its vehicles before leaving India. The armoured cars and carriers which were taken over were Humbers Mks. III and IV and Carriers I.P., no different to those held by the regiment in India, but in lieu of 15 Cwt. trucks for the rifle troops, scout cars were issued, and these vehicles are ideal for the purpose.

On June 18th, the regiment moved to Ahwaz where squadrons were detached. "B" squadron moving to Masjid-i-Sulaiman, "C" to Agha Jari and Pazanun, and "Regtl. "H.Q. and "H.Q" squadron to Haft Khel. The handover between the Poona Horse and the Jodhpur Lancers provided an occasion for a reunion amongst the Rajputs

and Kayamkhanies of each regiment, as the Poona Horse recruit the majority of their men from Jodhpur State.

It did not take the Regiment long to settle down in the oilfields. It was a somewhat tedious existence calling for numerous small detachments and guards, but this in no way lowered the morale of the men. Conditions varied tremendously, while in some places buildings and electric light were available, in others, tents and dust were the order. The heat too was intense, but the health of the men remained excellent. During the five months in the oilfields, squadrons changed round so that all had a chance of spending some time in the good stations.

There were few events of outstanding interest, but two disasters should not go unmentioned. On August 8th, Major K. Surajbhan Singh met with an accident which proved fatal. During the trade testing of I.O.Rs for driver mechanics in Gach Saran, he was examining a man in a driving test on an armoured car. While going down an incline, the driver attempted to change gear, he missed the gear and looked down, then on raising his eyes to the road he was dazzled by the bright light and rising sun which caused him to drive over a pile of stones on the side of the road and throw out the steering. The armoured car then rolled over an embankment and Major K. Surajbhan Singh was pinned between the turret and ground and killed instantly. As the senior State Officer, his loss was a shattering blow. On August 26th, information was received that Lt.-Colonel R.G. Hanmer, who had been admitted to Hospital on August 17th, was

suffering from infantile paralysis and had been placed in medical category D. He was to be sent to England as soon as arrangements could be made.

During August, a composite squadron, under Major Chandan Singh, went out on a training drive, with the additional objects of allowing as many men as possible to see parts of Persia not frequently visited by British forces, and also of showing the flag in these parts. The route selected included places of such historic interest, as Shiraz and Isfahan. The first four days were of little interest, as the area traversed was either through the foothills or plains, and the heat, therefore was intense. At Kazerun, however, on the fourth evening, the officers were entertained to dinner by the officers of the local Persian garrison. The garrison consisted of a brigade, and it was the Brigadier himself who took charge of things.

Nothing was too much trouble. Guards and picquets were detailed to protect the camp site and tremendous enthusiasm was shown by the Persians to whom an armoured car unit was a novelty not to be easily forgotten. The Brigadier was profuse in his apologies that he could offer our officers no English drinks. It was, therefore, decided to supply the party with some gin, whisky, and brandy. The Persians provided local wine and an excellent dinner, to the accompaniment of their military band. Dinner was followed by exhibitions of various Persian and Armenian dances by the officers, and the party showed every sign of continuing all night. It had been a hard day, however, the squadron having been fifteen hours on the

road, so Major Chandan Singh had to make his apologies at midnight so that our officers could retire to bed. The following morning, the Camp was besieged by Persian troops all wanting to examine our vehicles. It was not possible to allow everyone to swarm over the armoured cars and carriers, but the majority were able to satisfy their curiosity. The Brigadier and a few of his officers were taken for a drive round in armoured cars, which met with great approval. At, 9 A.M. the squadron left.

The same evening, the squadron reached Shiraz. It had been an interesting journey over the Kutli-i-Pirzan, a pass of 7500 feet approached by a road which seemed to wind endlessly up the mountain side. Shiraz stands in the middle of a barren plain and its greenery stands out like an oasis in the desert. There is no great river to irrigate the land, but, instead, a plentiful supply of water is obtained from karezes, and the town is full of beautiful gardens. The abundance of fruit was a great joy to the men, but like every thing else in Persia, a prohibitive price was asked. To a great extent that was overcome by barter when it was discovered that the Persians would give almost any thing for a few cigarettes or a handful of tea or sugar. Three days were spent here, and there were many historic sights to look at, so the time was all too short.

On the 19th, the squadron left Shiraz, and, about thirty miles distant, came to one of the most famous monuments in Persia. The Necropolis, which is now only a ruin, is a magnificent example of ancient Greek architecture. Much is being done by a party of French archaeologists to restore parts of the ruins and reproduce

part of the ancient buildings. This type of architecture is a strange contrast to any thing Persian.

The day's march took the squadron through several villages where eager crowds turned out to greet them. Eggs and chickens, fruit and vegetables were offered, and, here again, money proved of little use compared with cigarettes and tea. By evening, Abadi was reached, some 175 miles from Shiraz. A pleasant camp site was chosen by a spring near the foot of the hills, and surrounded by gardens. Here, there was plenty of scope for bathing and washing clothes. Captain Tej Singh, the Medical Officer, soon found himself in demand. Numerous villagers assembled and began to shower the harassed doctor with their complaints. Soon he was hard at work opening up abscesses, extracting teeth, treating ulcers and wounds and handing out pills to others whose cases did not merit the surgeon's knife. In payment, he was forced to accept almonds, grapes, peaches, chickens, and eggs, in fact, all that the impoverished, but grateful, inhabitants could offer. It was a great event for the local people, and, will no doubt, remain in their minds for many years.

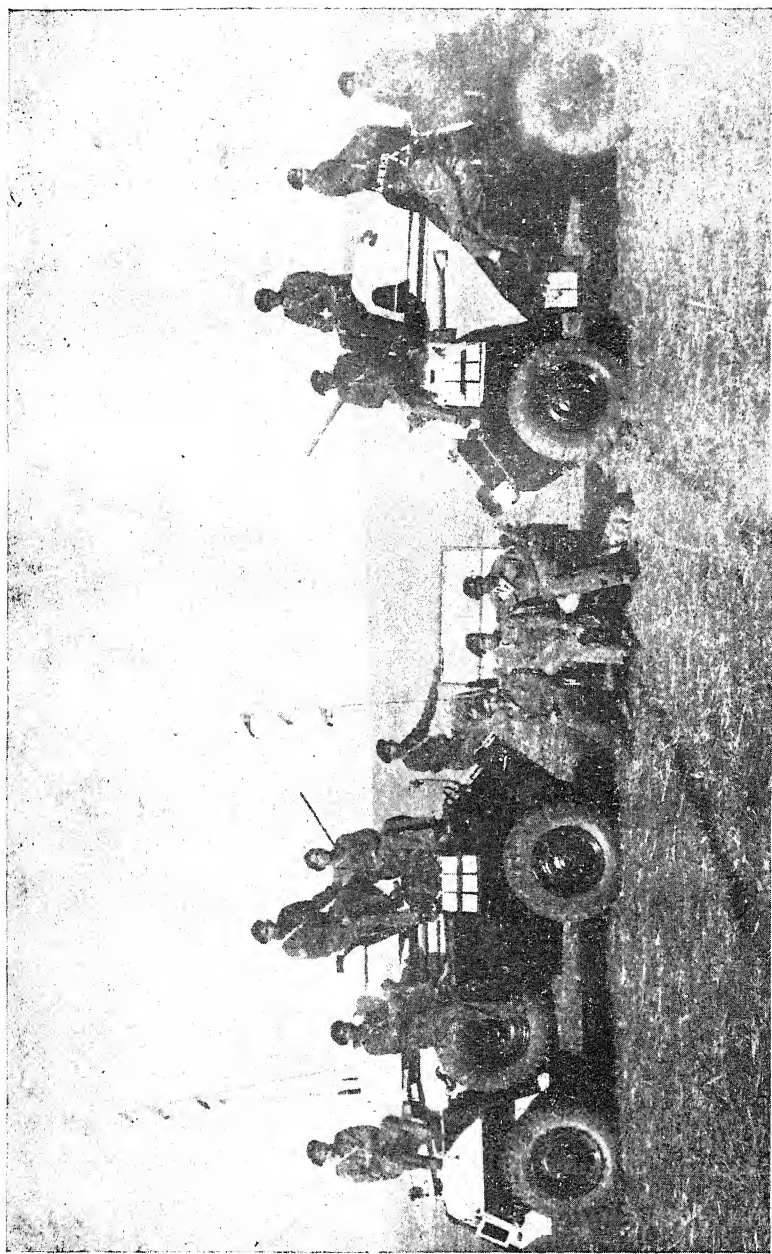
The following day Isfahan was reached. Like Shiraz, this is a place of historic importance with many interesting sights. Accommodation was arranged in a walled in compound near the middle of the town for the men, and the officers were billeted at an hotel. This gave everyone the maximum freedom and comfort and the four days in Isfahan were a delightful rest. The Blue Mosque, the Royal Pavilion and, outside Isfahan, the shaking towers were all sights worth visiting.

From Isfahan, Captain Tej Singh and Captain Allman went up to Teheran, as it was not possible to send the squadron there. They rejoined again at Sultanabad. Back in Sultanabad one was once more in the military zone, and here, supplies were replenished and the troops were entertained to an Indian film. The squadron remained three days in order to patch up the crocks and put everything in order for the final stage of the journey.

After Sultanabad the next stage was Burujird. It was a pleasant journey through an attractive valley. Here, there are vast areas of cultivation in addition to the gardens on the banks of the river. At Malayer one meets the "aid to Russia" road from Khurramshahr on the Shatt-el-Arab, and the amount of traffic was tremendous. Convoy after convoy, each of 50 to 80 vehicles, travelling like demons. At Burujird, camp was pitched outside the town, this was the last good camp.

The rest of the journey was tedious, getting hotter all the time. There were no events worthy of note, and, after three days, on the road, the squadron arrived back in the oilfields. In all, some 1600 miles had been covered with nothing worse than a few mechanical defects. The spirits of the men who took part were very high and, though at times they had been called upon for long and strenuous work, there was no-one who did not enjoy it to the full.

During September and October, there were no events of any importance. Squadrons carried out their routine duties in the oilfield and changed round from time to time. In October, the



Officers and men of "A" squadron H. Q. during their stay at Mahane Yisrael camp near
Affula, Palestine, in January 1946.

regiment had two days holidays on account of Diwali. It was the excuse for great celebrations and the general concensus of opinion was that it was the best Diwali since the regiment left Jodhpur State. On the first evening, a cocktail party was held in Haft Khel in the Officers Mess, which was gaily illuminated for the occasion.

By the beginning of November, the weather had started to get cooler and the first rains came. On November 14th, the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Paiforce, Lt.-General Sir Arthur Smith, accompanied by a Staff Officer, visited the Oilfields. He was met on his arrival by air at Masjid-i-Sulaiman by the Sub Area Commander, Colonel E.H.R. Boyd, and Major H.M. Bromilow. His visit was purely on the invitation of the A.I.O.C. However, he inspected the lines and talked to the men in each area as he went round. The visit was a short one, carried out by air, and, on the 17th, the party left Gach Saran by air for Abadan.

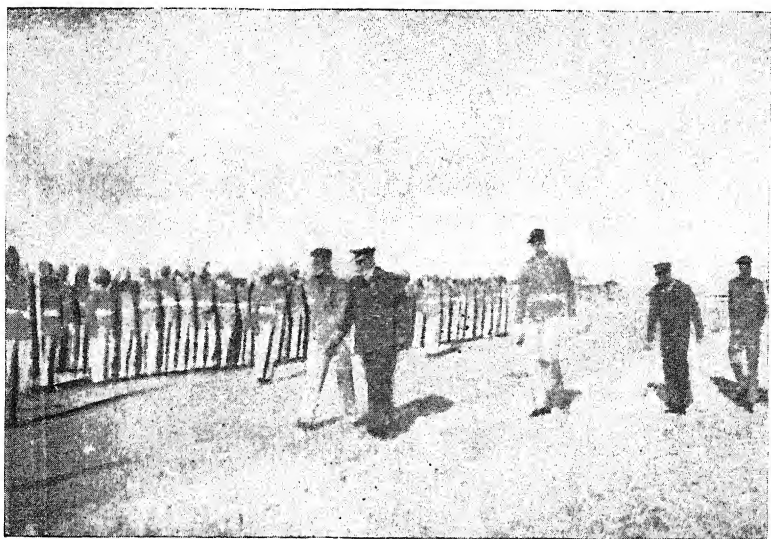
The latter part of the month was spent handing over to the 10th Baluch Regiment. The Jodhpur Lancers left the Oilfields on November 30th, and, on arrival in Ahwaz, were met by Lt.-Colonel E.J.R. Emtage, who had arrived from the 6th D.C.O. Lancers in Italy to take over command of the regiment.

On December 1st, Persia Area ordered the Jodhpur Lancers to remain in Ahwaz, as the camp being prepared for them with the 24th Indian infantry brigade in Andimishk was not ready. Accordingly, a large number of men

were sent up to Andimishk to help construct vehicle standings and generally assist with the layout of the camp. In Ahwaz, trade tests for gunner mechanics were carried out and also field firing. During this period, the Persia Area Commander visited the regiment and inspected the lines. On December 11th, information was received from H.Q., Paiforce, that His Highness the Maharaja of Jodhpur would visit the regiment at the end of the month. Work on the camp in Andimishk was progressing with customary Persian zeal, the miserable workmen being assured of a job so long as the camp remained incomplete. It was, therefore, decided that the move could be delayed no longer, and, accordingly, on December 12th, the regiment left Ahwaz and arrived at Andimishk that evening. It was a memorable occasion. The last vehicle had hardly arrived when it started to rain. Soon complete chaos reigned. Every where was flooded and, although dykes were hastily constructed around the tents, very few stood up to the torrential downpour. The following morning the camp was a quagmire and the whole day was spent digging ditches and generally getting the water logged area under control. Work on the camp continued unabated for the next week and even throughout the Christmas holidays, men worked like slaves in order that the camp might be looking its best for His Highness' visit, and true devotion was put into the work as the results justly showed. During this period, officers had opportunities to visit the country around Andimishk and study it from a training point of view. Other units in the camp were visited, amongst whom were the 2/6th Rajputana Rifles, who enlist many men from Jodhpur State.



His Highness on Armoured Car "AMBER", charger of O. C.,
"A" squadron, Major Jagat Singh.



His Highness with the squadron Commander, Major Jagat Singh,
Lt-Colonel E. J. R. Emtage, Maharaj Sir Ajeet Singh,
and Major H. M. Bromilow going to inspect
"A" Squadron during his visit to the

On December 27th, Major Th. Jagat Singh proceeded to Basrah to meet the Maharaja of Jodhpur and party who arrived by air from Italy. The following day, His Highness reached Andimishk by car, accompanied by his brother, Colonel Maharajadhiraj Sir Ajit Singh and Captain Th. Hari Singh of Kuchaman, A.D.C. They were met on arrival by Lt.-Colonel Emtage, and, after inspecting a guard of honour, the officers of the regiment were presented to His Highness. His Highness and party then had lunch in the Mess with the officers. During the afternoon, a hockey match was arranged between the officers and V.C.Os. In the course of his stay, His Highness visited each squadron in their Mess, and, after talking to the men, he received petitions. On the second day of his visit, the regiment carried out field firing. The 2/6th Rajputana Rifles sent all their men recruited from Jodhpur State over to meet His Highness. The party left from Basrah on the morning of January 1st, 1945, after five days with the regiment. The visit was appreciated very much indeed and it was a great honour to have the Maharaja living under canvas with the men of the unit. It was most regrettable that on the second day of his visit, His Highness should receive news of the death of his sister, Her Highness the Maharani of Jaipur. However, he refused to allow this to interfere with the programme set out for his visit and the only event which was cancelled was a march past.

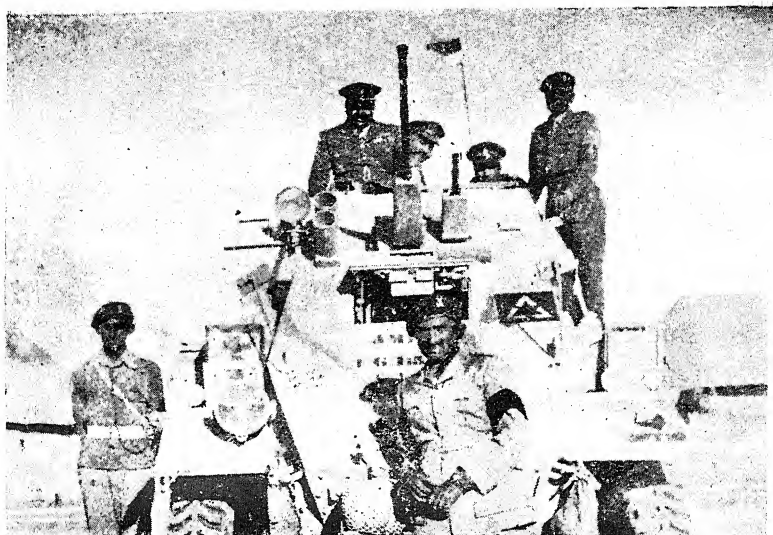
With the New Year, the regiment settled down to collective training. This consisted, first, of troop training gradually working up to squadron schemes. The weather improved towards the latter half of the month and squadrons were

again able to move freely about the training areas. In order to attain a high standard of wireless communication, prior to the commencement of regimental training, static wireless exercises involving the entire regimental wireless layout, were held periodically in the lines.

At the end of January, Major Kalyan Singh left the regiment for Italy to attend a tactical course. Major Dhonkal Singh had departed in October for the same course. During their time in Italy, both officers visited most parts of the country and did an attachment with a unit in the line, but, unfortunately, could not manage to get attached to a Divisional reconnaissance unit. However, they gained much valuable experience and saw active service conditions such as were common in Italy in the winter.

In February, squadrons were attached to infantry battalions and carried out schemes with the infantry. This brought out many interesting points, not least amongst which was the question of communications.

“A” squadron was selected to give a demonstration to the Brigade. Each unit was detailed to give some demonstration for the benefit of the rest of the brigade—“A” squadron was given the task of clearing a road block. The demonstration was carried out extremely well and gave units a fair idea of one of the tasks the Divisional reconnaissance squadron can perform. On this occasion, the spectators were able to hear the actual orders given by the squadron commander and troop leaders during the incident, as these were relayed through a loud speaker.



His Highness snapped with Sir Ajeet Singh, Captain Hari Singh, A. D. C., Major Jagat Singh, and Captain Sardar Singh when he visited the Jodhpur Lancers in 1944 in Persia.



1st troop, "A" squadron, somewhere near Haifa in January, 1946.

In the middle of February, "C" squadron and Regimental H.Q. departed to join the 27th Indian infantry brigade in Kanaquin to take part in manoeuvres with the brigade. Lt.-Colonel Emtage followed on later as he had to remain behind to meet the General Officer Commanding, who paid a short visit to the regiment. From the remnants of the regiment a team had to be selected to represent the regiment in a rifle meeting to be held in Cairo. This was to consist of one V.C.O., one daffadar, one lance daffadar, and five Indian other ranks. Great enthusiasm was shown and the results proved worthy of the trouble taken as the regiment secured second place. Holi was celebrated in Andimishk, and, with most of the regiment together, it was an event which will long be remembered.

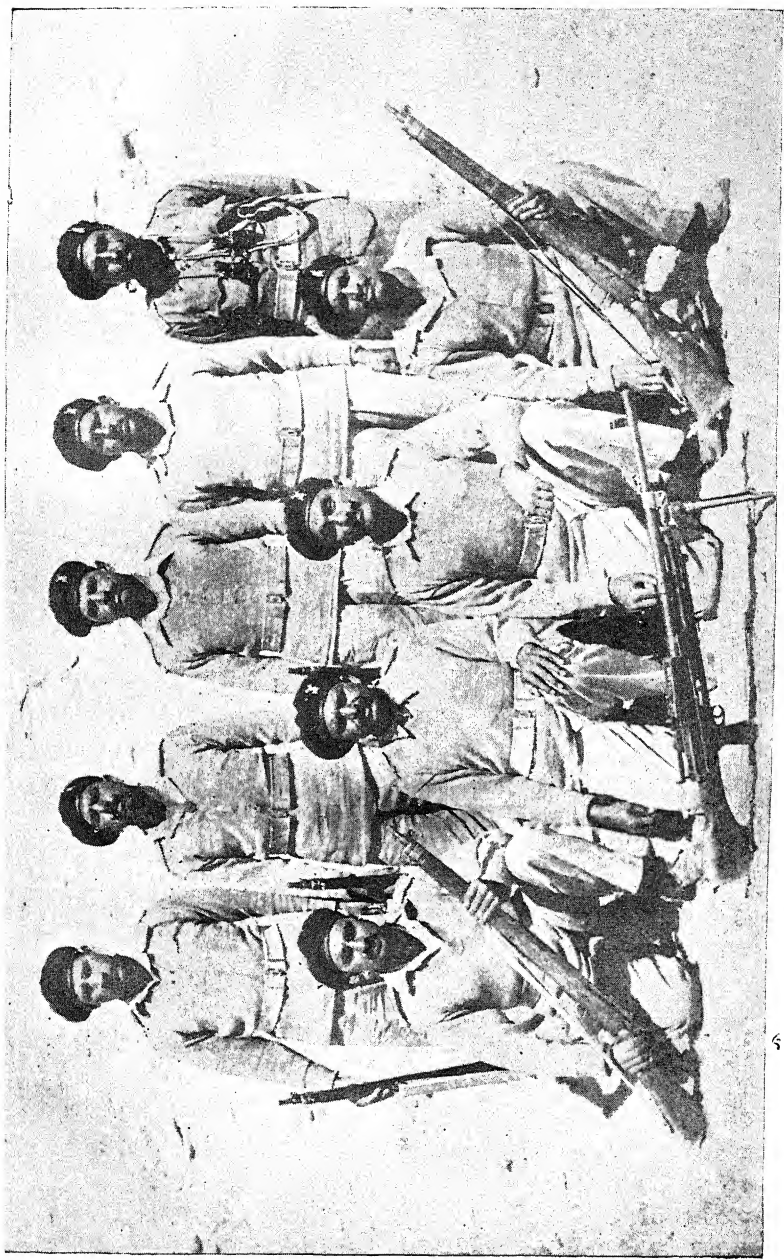
At the beginning of March, the regiment, less Regimental H.Q. and "C" squadron, set out on a brigade exercise known as "Circus," which was to last for three weeks. The exercise was directed by the Brigade Commander, and, apart from umpires, each unit was given an observer who acted as critic and reported on the activities of his unit.

The regiment had two main roles throughout the exercise. One was to act as advance guard to the brigade and the other to provide road protection. The latter was an extremely tedious business, involving constant patrolling throughout the hours of daylight. In order, therefore, to relieve the tediousness, squadrons did two days as advance guard, then two days patrolling. These were long days when squadrons moved out of harbour before daylight and came in after

dark. Throughout the period, the conduct of the regiment was described as exemplary. March discipline, camouflaging and black-out were all observed with the strictest compliance. Perhaps the worst day of all was when the brigade had to cross a ferry erected by the engineers. It was 0300 hours before the regiment got into harbour.

The exercise finished on March 19th, but, as the regiment was not allowed to return to camp till the 22nd, field firing was carried out. Meanwhile, Regimental H.Q., the mortar troop, and "C" squadron arrived at Kanaquin on February 20th, after a march of some 500 miles. On arrival, a week was spent in maintaining vehicles and preparing for the forthcoming exercise with the 27th Indian infantry brigade. A light pontoon brigade was handed over to the regiment and a drill for erecting it was soon perfected by the rifle troops. It proved invaluable during the ensuing period and was capable of carrying all types of vehicles in the regiment including the breakdown lorry. On February 26th and 27th, Holi was celebrated with the Bikaner Sadul Light Infantry.

The 27th Brigade Exercise was scheduled to commence on March 1st, but owing to excessive rain on February 28th and March 1st, it had to be postponed till March 2nd. Rain in Iraq causes a quagmire, and wheeled transport is brought to a standstill everywhere excepting on the main roads. On March 2nd, the brigade moved to Baquba. It was a normal road move with a squadron of the Jodhpur Lancers acting as advance guard. Brigade colour parties left with one troop prior to the move of the remainder



Jodhpur Lancers Rifle Team

Winners of the Second Prize in the Fire and Movement competition at the Middle East Rifle Meeting held at Cairo in 1945.

in order that the camp should be ready on the arrival of the main body. The local Sheikh gave a party to which the O.C., "C" squadron, was invited. Baquba proved to be one of the filthiest villages imaginable with masses of narrow winding streets. However, it produces excellent oranges.

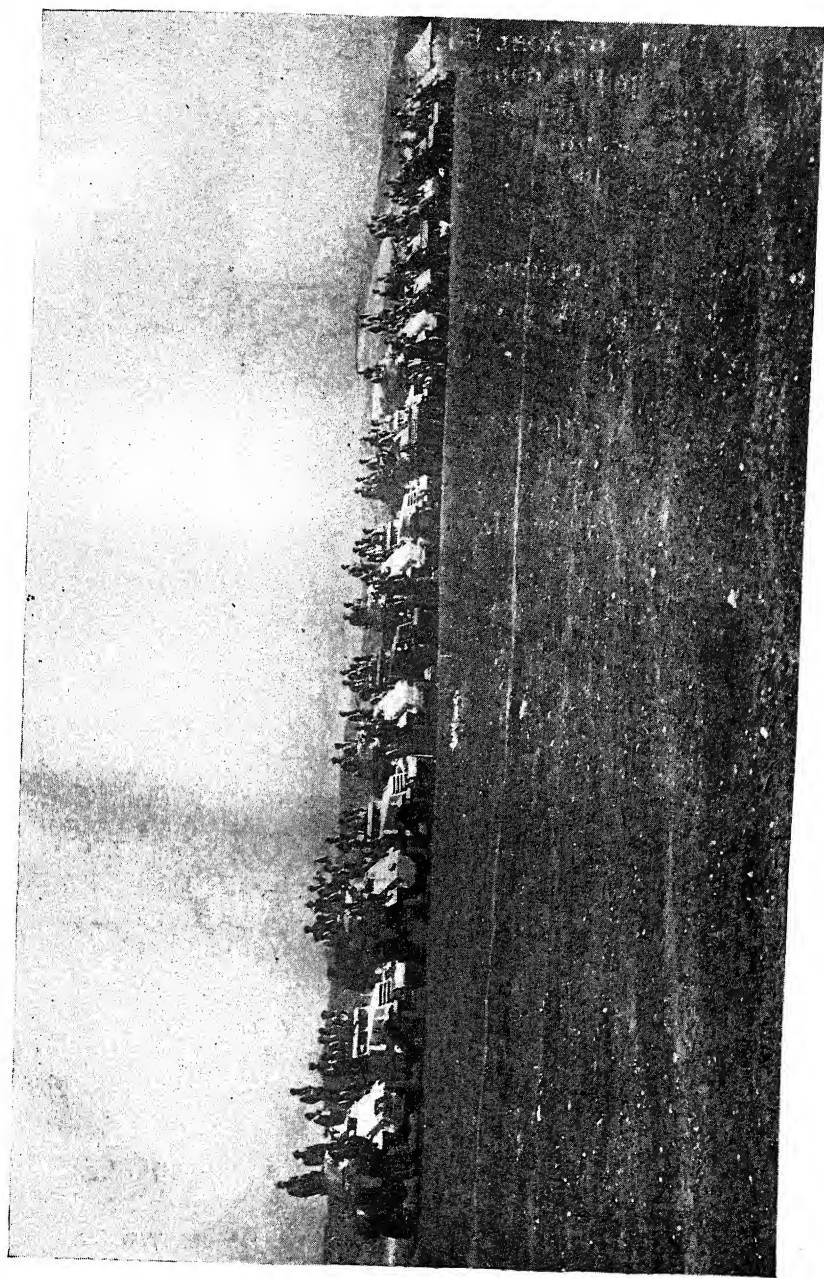
On March 3rd, the brigade moved to Kanazad, South of Baghdad, and here carried out an exercise on March 3rd and 4th with the Iraq levies. The Commander-in-Chief, Paiforce, was present and many high ranking Iraq officers. The next camp was at Musaiyib on March 5th. Here also the local Sheikh entertained many officers to dinner. The next day was spent resting on the banks of the Euphrates. On March 7th, the brigade camped at Hilla. This is a well laid out town on the banks of one of the big irrigation canals which run between the Tigris and Euphrates. It is also close to the ancient ruin of Babylon, and many people took the opportunity to visit the place. While the brigade proceeded to Diwaniya, "C" squadron acted as protection to an infantry battalion up to Kufa. That night heavy rain made going extremely difficult and the journey back on the following day was achieved only by virtue of the fact that the squadron vehicles were four wheel drive and used skid chains. At the same time, Lieut. Umaid Singh carried out a reconnaissance over the desert tract to Nimanja. He had an extremely difficult journey owing to the rain, but succeeded in achieving his object.

On March 9th, the squadron marched to Diwaniya about 75 miles south of Hilla, the area traversed was well irrigated and fertile,

At Diwaniya, the Sheikh gave a dinner party. The mass of food was unbelievable, and included whole sheep, chickens and fish up to three or four feet in length. The A.L.O. had previously warned officers how to behave at such ceremonies as the Arab Sheikh might take mortal offence at some comparatively trivial act. The next two days were spent on a brigade scheme and "C" squadron had to make extensive use of their bridging equipment as the area covered was intersected by canals.

On the 8th, one troop went off with the Guides Infantry to show the flag in a village called Abusukhaiyar where the Sheikh was supposed to be anti-British. On acquaintance, however, this proved false, for he entertained all ranks to a stupendous banquet. This force returned to do enemy during the scheme on March 10th and 11th. During this scheme, the brigade was commanded by Lt.-Colonel Emtage. "C" squadron was given the task of convoy protection. The Commander-in-Chief and several high ranking Iraqi officers were present.

On March 12th, the brigade halted at Samawa and reached Nasariya on the 13th, when they halted for three days. These three days were spent reconnoitring the area round, and those who had guns had some of the finest duck shooting imaginable. On the 14th, the squadron gave a demonstration of reconnoitring a village to Iraq Army officers and afterwards one Brigadier and eight officers inspected the squadron's vehicles and equipment. The Iraqii seemed much impressed by the mobility of the squadron in this role. They followed the squadron in White Scout cars fitted with 109 sets in order



"B" Squadron in Palestine, January 1946.

that they could hear the orders given throughout the manoeuvres. The Mustarif of the village gave tea to the squadron and finally the Iraqi officers were entertained to lunch by the squadron commander. During the afternoon, the squadron was ferried across the Euphrates and on this occasion, the breakdown lorry almost proved too much for the ferry; however, it was successfully transported.

The same evening a large dinner party was given by Iraqi officers and civilian officials. Of all the dinner parties attended, this was the first when wine was served. On March 15th, a sports competition was held when our troops competed against the Iraqis. It was noticeable that the Iraqis generally won the sprinting races while our men were superior in distance events. Many Sheikhs were present and the event was a great success. On the 16th, the brigade moved to Qalatsikar. The road was very bad and many vehicles spent the night out. On the 17th, they reached Kut-al-Amara, scene of the disastrous siege during the last war. The town, however, is comparatively new and well laid out. Here a farewell party was given to the 27th brigade whom they left on the 18th and proceeded via Al-Amara to Ahwaz. Ahwaz was reached on March 20th, and, on arrival, they were greeted with the news that the regiment was to return to the oilfields. "C" squadron and the mortar troop remained in Ahwaz while administrative vehicles returned to Andimishk to collect kit. The regiment arrived in the oilfields on March 27th.

The six months spent in the oilfields were uneventful except for Victory in Europe Day

and a visit by General Paget, Commander-in-Chief, Middle East. It was with great jubilation that the news came through in July that the regiment was to move to Kermanshah. The move was delayed owing to the difficulties of getting the Hyderabad Light Infantry transported. Eventually, "A" squadron and "C" squadron left on August 12th. The remainder left on August 16th, and arrived on August 19th. Victory in Japan celebrations were held up until the whole regiment was present and after pagal sports the men sat down to a huge khana.

At the beginning of September, 1945, thefts of telephone wire were becoming so frequent that the Commander, Persia Area, decided to send a squadron to Hamadan with two troops at Hamsabad between Kermanshah and Hamadan with the object of patrolling the telephone line and providing an escort for signal line parties who went out to locate and repair the damaged line.

On September 10th, 1945, O.C., "B" squadron, received a message at 2145 hours that the line between Hamadan and Hamsabad had been cut. Immediately, a patrol, under Risaldar Partap Singh, left and picked up the signals line party, then proceeded down the road to locate the cut. At about 2300 hours the cut was discovered. A thorough search was made of the surrounding area with the aid of spot lights, and, eventually, a bundle of wire, some food and a pair of shoes were found. Footprints were discovered leading away from this place and these were followed for five or six hundred yards until the patrol came across a hut. Here they found a small boy aged about 12 or 13. Attempts were made to interrogate him, but no



Colonel Sir Ajeet Singh, who accompanied His Highness
on his visit, chatting with officers of the Jodhpur
Lancers in Persia.



Men of "A" squadron who shot a Persian stealing wire at

useful information was forthcoming. Next morning, the military police and Field security sergeant arrived on the spot and succeeded in extracting a certain amount of information from the boy, who eventually led the party to a nearby village, where he identified two men as being the thieves. The three were then handed over to the Civil Police.

This incident reduced the number of cases of wire stealing very considerably, but there were one or two more cases in this area.

In the mean time, thefts were on the increase in the Dorud, Malayer, Sultanabad area, so, on September 21st, "A" squadron moved out and the squadron, less two troops, went to Sultanabad, and two troops to Malayer.

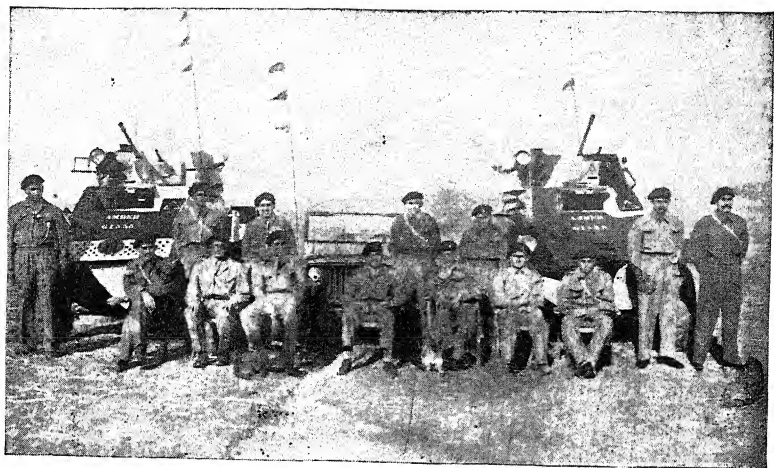
On September 26th, at about 2230 hours, information was received that the wire had been cut between Sultanabad and Malayer. No. 126 Dfr. Sohan Singh was ordered to take a patrol out to accompany the signal line party. About six miles from Sultanabad, the cut was discovered, and Dfr. Sohan Singh, together with Sepoy Sukha Singh, Indian Signal Corps and Sowar Sujan Singh, moved off along the line of telegraph poles. Soon they came across three suspicious looking Persians. Dfr. Sohan Singh challenged the party, and immediately one of the men rushed at him with a dagger. Dfr. Sohan Singh fired at him with his revolver, whereupon he dropped the dagger and ran away. Then a second man came forward, picked up the dagger and went for Dfr. Sohan Singh who fired two shots at the man which made him run away. Finally, the third man came for Dfr. Sohan Singh.

with an axe. Sohan Singh fired the remaining three shots in his pistol, wounding the man who dropped his axe and rushed forward gripping Sohan Singh by the throat. Sujan Singh came to the rescue, and released the man's grip, whereupon Sohan Singh knocked him down. In the mean time, L/Dfr. Padam Singh, who had been about 100 yards in rear, came up and shot the Persian with a tommy gun.

This action was instrumental in recovering the stolen wire and no further incidents occurred near Sultanabad.

On October 20th, 1945, the Regiment left Kermanshah, on transfer to the Middle East Force, and proceeded to Haifa, Palestine. It was, of course, of the greatest interest to all ranks of the Regiment to see this place, as it was at Haifa during the war of 1914-19 that the Jodhpur Lancers made an undying name for itself, when it carried out an historic cavalry charge against the strongly defended Turkish position there, during which it lost its Commanding Officer, Lt.-Colonel Dalpat Singh, and incurred many other casualties.

Captain Girdhari Singh, Quartermaster, Jodhpur Lancers, was awarded the M.B.E. in the New Year's Honours, January 1st, 1946, while Lt.-Colonel E.J.R. Emtage was mentioned in dispatches in a Gazette dated November 29th, 1945, for gallant and distinguished service in Italy.



"A" squadron H. Q. photographed in Palestine, January 1946.



"A" squadron on its way back from Sultanabad to join the Jodhpur Lancers at Bisitun, Persia.

CHAPTER III.

The Jodhpur Sardar Infantry.

PART I.

THE Jodhpur Sardar Infantry remained at Jodhpur for the first year of the war. Hard training was the order of the day, but it was carried out with some feeling of impatience and a sense of futility, because there appeared no likelihood of the battalion being sent on field service or even of being employed in British India. There were occasional rumours that the battalion was to be sent to the North West Frontier, or that it was to be used on internal security in British India, but, like most rumours, they came to nought.

A training company was created for the training of recruits in November 1939.

However, on September 25th, 1940, to the great delight of all ranks, orders were received for the move of the battalion to Nowshera to undergo a period of training before being employed elsewhere.

On October 26th, His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur, accompanied by Brigadier R.C. Duncan, inspected the battalion on parade, and gave a most inspiring farewell address to all ranks.

On October 31st, 1940, the battalion left Jodhpur in two special trains for Nowshera, being seen off by a large crowd of people.

The following officers left with the battalion:—

STATE OFFICERS.

Lt.-Colonel Rao Raja

Sujan Singh

Officer Commanding
2nd-in-Command.

Major Th. Jawahir Singh

Captain K. Ram Singh.

Captain Lajpat Rai.

Captain Dhonkal Singh.

Lieut. Umed Ram.

Lieut. Chhattar Singh.

Lieut. Gulab Singh.

Lieut. Magni Ram.

Quarter Master.
Adjutant.

Lieut. Dungar Singh

2nd.-Lieut. Deep Singh.

2nd.-Lieut. Laxman Ram.

MEDICAL OFFICER.

2nd.-Lieut. Ram Singh.

STATE OFFICER CADETS.

Gopal.

Pehap Singh.

SPECIAL SERVICE OFFICERS.

Lt.-Colonel F.D. Clarke, 8th Gurkha Rifles.

2nd.-Lieut. P.W.J. Crossland, 15th Punjab
" Regiment.

INDIAN OFFICERS.

Subedar-Major Sultan Singh.

Subedar Jeewan Ram.

Subedar Baneh Singh.

Subedar Kumbha Ram.

Subedar Asha Ram.

Subedar Chand Singh.
Subedar Ramkaran Ram.
Subedar Prem Singh.
Jemadar Bheem Singh.
Jemadar Bhoor Singh.
Jemadar Chimna Ram.
Jemadar Nanu Ram.
Jemadar Mohan Singh.
Jemadar Madho Singh.
Jemadar Khiva Ram.
Jemadar Kishna Ram.
Jemadar Kishna Ram.
Jemadar Basti Ram.
Jemadar Sugan Singh.
Jemadar Ganpat Singh.
Jemadar Kana Ram.

The strength of the battalion was 12 State Officers, 2 Special Service Officers, 2 State Officer Cadets, 21 Indian Officers, 628 Indian Other Ranks, 56 Followers, 10 Horses, and 32 Mules.

The battalion arrived at Nowshera on November 3rd, and went into camp on the R.A. camping ground, but on November 9th, it moved to a training camp at Pitao, 17 miles from Nowshera, and remained there until December 21st. It was visited, while in camp, by the G.O.C., Peshawar District, and the Brigade Commander.

Early in January 1941, it took part in an inter-brigade exercise between the Nowshera and Peshawar brigades.

On January 31st, Lt.-Colonel Rao Raja Sujan Singh, who had commanded the battalion

for a number of years, vacated the command to take up the appointment of Staff Officer to the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, and Lt.-Colonel Thakur Jawahir Singh succeeded him in command of the battalion.

At about the same time, Lt.-Colonel F.D. Clarke, who had been a Special Service Officer with the battalion for sometime, left to command a Gurkha battalion, and Captain L.H.W. Axtell joined as a Special Service Officer.

Warning orders were received on March 19th, for the move of the battalion to Quetta, and it left Nowshera on April 18th, 1941, detraining at Gulistan, whence it marched to Spinatizha the same day, and arrived at Quetta on April 23rd, and was accommodated in barracks at East Camp.

The stay of the battalion at Quetta was not of long duration, for on June 6th, 1941, it entrained and proceeded to Karachi, prior to proceeding overseas. It was, of course, the first time most of the men had ever seen the sea before, and there was great excitement, and all ranks wondered what adventures lay ahead.

The battalion, under the command of Lt.-Colonel Thakur Jawahir Singh, embarked at Karachi on June 10th, 1941, in two ships—the battalion, less "A" Company, in S.S. Devonshire, and "A" Company, under Captain Dhonkal Singh, in S.S. Neuralia. The Nabha Akal Infantry was also in the Devonshire and the Mewar Infantry in another ship. Brigadier Watson, Commander of the 34th Indian States Forces Brigade, and his Staff, were in the convoy,

which was escorted by destroyers and sloops of the Royal Navy and Royal Indian Navy.

It was, of course, a great event for all ranks, none of whom had ever been on a sea voyage before, and very few of whom had ever seen the sea or a ship. Although there was a feeling of sadness at leaving their families and their homeland, this was more than counteracted by the eagerness of everyone to see new countries and different people, and, above all, the opportunity of earning a great name, not only for themselves and the battalion, but for Jodhpur State.

As the ships left the port of Karachi that early morning of June 11th, 1941, there were cries from all ranks of "Jai bole Shree Chamunda Devi ki Jai" and "Jai bole Shree Maharaja Umaid Singhji ki jai", which continued until the coast of India appeared like a mere smudge on the ocean.

The sea was rough soon after leaving port, and the men, unaccustomed to this form of travel, felt the motion badly, and a great number suffered from sea sickness. However, the early morning P.T. parades and morning inspection were fairly well attended, and in a couple of days most of the men had recovered.

The ship was sailing under sealed orders, so that no one in the battalion had any idea where they were going. Many were the conjectures—some saying the battalion was going to Burma, others to Africa. It was not until the battalion arrived at Aden, 5 days after leaving Karachi, that it was known that they were on their way to Africa.

On June 22nd the convoy arrived at Massawa, in Eritrea, which, at that time of year, is abominably hot. Quite unexpectedly, and to the great delight of all ranks, they were welcomed at Massawa by the Jaipur Guards, who had arrived there previously.

“A” Company disembarked on June 22nd, and the remainder of the battalion the following day. The work of disembarkation was a sticky business in that great heat, and water bottles were quickly emptied. However, the Jaipur Guards had foreseen this and had very kindly arranged a plentiful supply of cool drinking water.

From Massawa, the battalion travelled in M.T. lorries to Gura, some 40 miles from Massawa, halting for a short time at Ghinda, where there was a detachment of the Jaipur Guards and where the men were given light refreshment. It reached Gura after nightfall, and was accommodated in some Italian barracks close to a wrecked aerodrome.

When the men woke up the following morning, they were pleasantly surprised to find that the countryside was very beautiful and the climate good—a great change from Massawa.

The battalion stayed at Gura for three weeks, during which time it carried out training. While there, His Highness the Maharaja of Jaipur, accompanied by Brigadier Toovey, visited the battalion, and dined with the officers and saw the men.

From Gura, the battalion went to Asmara, the capital of Eritrea, where it was almost entirely

employed on guards and station duties, which were very heavy. Little training could be carried out owing to lack of men. However, Asmara was a beautiful town, rations were excellent, and the men kept very fit, so that they enjoyed their stay there greatly. A battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders was stationed at Asmara, and a great friendship sprang up between the two battalions. Our officers were often invited to drinks at the Argyll and Sutherland officers Mess, and their officers were entertained in the Sardar Infantry Mess several times. The Commanding Officer of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders kindly offered to lend his pipe major to coach the Sardar Infantry pipers, and the battalion pipe band was lucky to have the opportunity of getting some instruction from the pipers of this distinguished Highland regiment.

On July 17th, the battalion was inspected by the Kaid (Lieut.-General Sir W. Platt), who was introduced to all the officers and went round the lines.

With the object of searching for arms which were believed to be secreted in certain villages, "C" Company, under Captain Dungar Singh, was sent to Agordat. A number of villages were searched and a quantity of arms and ammunition were collected and confiscated. So well did Captain Dungar Singh carry out his job that he was specially complimented by the Area Commander. Later, "A" Company, under Captain Dhonkal Singh, was sent to Barentu for the same purpose, and this company also did particularly well. A report on the work carried

out by "A" Company from August 27th to September 3rd, 1941, read as follows:—

"The expedition, although not greatly productive of material results, created a desirable impression on the local inhabitants. The local police, who accompanied the detachment, say that there are no more arms now in this district. The detachment was well commanded by Captain Dhonkal Singh."

The detachment worked well and benefitted from a training point of view. Especially are they to be commended for the distances marched during the week, which included two marches of 26 miles each day, over country which is difficult at this time of year owing to soft cotton soil and high vegetation."

His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur, accompanied by Colonel Maharaj Ajit Singh and Major Bishan Singh, arrived by air on August 8th, 1941, to visit the battalion. Accompanied by Brigadiers Toovey and Watson, he carried out an inspection of the battalion in hollow square the following day. The battalion was relieved of all guards and duties during the visit so that His Highness was able to see all ranks. His Highness dined with the officers in the officers mess on several occasions, and he also dined with the Indian officers. He visited all the military installations guarded by men of the battalion, and also saw the other State battalions in the brigade—The Jaipur Guards, the Gwalior Infantry, the Alwar Jai Paltan, and the Nabha Akal Infantry.

Altogether, His Highness stayed at Asmara for a week, and it can be well imagined how

delighted all ranks of the battalion were to have their Ruler with them. All officers were present on the aerodrome on his departure by air to Cairo, and his visit was a topic of conversation in the battalion for a long time to come.

There was excellent small game shooting to be had in Eritrea—guinea fowl, francolin, green pigeon, snipe, and sand grouse were in abundance, and a very small species of gazelle, known as “dig-dig” was common. Officers had been able to buy a number of shot guns at Asmara, and they took the opportunity of going out on shooting expeditions on many occasions.

The battalion remained at Asmara for about four months when it moved to Adiugri on the border of Abyssinia for training, being relieved at Asmara by the Jaipur Guards. The climate of Adiugri was excellent and there was ideal ground all round for training purposes. Range practices and field firing were carried out, and M. T. drivers were trained. While there, the battalion was inspected by Major General Savory, Commander of the Eritrea Area, who reported most favourably on it.

On November 11th, 1941, a message was received in the middle of the night to the effect that it was believed that 15 enemy aircraft had landed with troops about 40 miles East of Adiugri. The battalion plus the machine gun platoon of the Nabha Akal Infantry embussed at 0400 hours and proceeded to the spot mentioned, where they were joined by Brigade H.Q. and a company of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. Patrols were at once sent out to search the area, but there was no sign of the enemy. British planes

were seen to be flying on a reconnaissance of the area, and one plane crashed in the vicinity of the battalion.

The battalion left Adiugri on November 29th for Asmara, whence it proceeded to Massawa to relieve the Gwalior Infantry. The climate at Massawa was now tolerable, but the duties, which mostly consisted of guarding Italian prisoners of war, were heavy.

At Massawa there was a good club, to which the state officers often went. Colonel Tomlinson, the Sub-Area Commander, persuaded several officers of the battalion to take up dancing, and they had a lot of fun having dancing lessons at the club, and dancing with the Italian girls.

Lt.-Colonel H.B. Rogers, 5th Maharatta Light Infantry, arrived at Massawa on February 26th, 1942, and assumed command of the battalion on March 2nd, vice Lt.-Colonel Thakur Jawahir Singh, who was required to command the Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre at Jodhpur.

The morning of Lt.-Colonel Jawahir Singh's departure, there was a special farewell parade for him, and he inspected the battalion for the last time. The battalion pipe band played a slow march, as he walked down the ranks and bade farewell to the men, whom he had commanded for the past 18 months, and of whom he had been in charge ever since they left the shores of India that morning of June 10th, 1941, and set forth on the great adventure. When he drove to the port of embarkation, the men of the battalion lined the road on either side and heartily cheered him as he slowly passed by.



Lieut.-Colonel Th. Jawahir Singh, M. B. E., who commanded the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry for one year in Eritrea and later, was Commandant of the Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre for the remainder of the War.

Major L.H.W. Axtell, who had been a Special Service Officer with the battalion for some time, also travelled to India in the same ship as Lt.-Colonel Jawahir Singh, on transfer.

The main duty of the battalion during its stay at Massawa was the guarding of Italian prisoners, of whom there were about 6,000. During the months of January and February, there was a great deal of unrest among these prisoners of war. Several tried to escape and were shot by our sentries, and, on one occasion, one of our sepoys, a boy of only five months service, who was part of an escort to prisoners of war, jumped from a lorry, which was travelling at a good speed, to arrest a prisoner who had tried to escape. On more than one occasion, the mobile company ("B" Company) was called out at short notice to quell disturbances among the prisoners. The battalion received a special message of appreciation from the Area Commander for the good work it had carried out, under difficult conditions, when guarding these prisoners of war. During March, various detachments were sent as escorts to prisoners being evacuated to Egypt.

On April 5th, 1942, the battalion embarked for Egypt, but the ship did not leave Massawa until two days later. The battalion had been in Eritrea for just under 10 months, and during that time it had gained much in experience and benefitted greatly by meeting other units and training alongside them. It had not had the opportunity of taking part in any actual fighting, but it had done efficiently all that it had been called upon to do, and had been well reported on by all the commanders under which it had served.

The ship which took the battalion to Egypt was a cross-channel packet, named the "Prince Badauin", and she had been sent out to do the run from Alexandria to Tobruk. She was not really fit for anything more than a one day trip. There was not enough accommodation for a battalion, no cooking arrangements of any sort, and no possibility of improvising any, dreadful troop decks with very bad ventilation, and no holds for baggage and stores. At the last moment, when all the stuff had been loaded carefully, so that it would be known later where it all was, a lot had to be moved to adjust the trim of the ship! The troops lived on what cooked food they could take on board, and then on biscuits and jam.

The ship was three hours late in arriving at Suez, owing to engine trouble, and she dropped anchor just after 1800 hours instead of 1500 hours. The troops stood by to disembark on arrival, but shortly afterwards were told that the ship would not go alongside that night, so they stood down. Then at 1900 hours, a Movement Control officer came on board and said that they would disembark that night. So, just as it was getting really dark, disembarkation started, and all the stuff was loaded with much difficulty into lighters by the aid of 4 hurricane lanterns. N.A.A.F.I. supplied some very welcome tea, chapatties, and cigarettes just before the troops entrained. The battalion left Suez at midnight for Qassassin. It was bitterly cold.

The battalion arrived at Qassassin about an hour before dawn, and, having detrained and loaded up baggage on lorries, went off to camp. It was an empty camp site, and everyone felt cold and rather miserable. However, with the

sun came some real friends—the Jaipur Guards, who were in the next camp and had food ready for our men.

The battalion was not long in Qassassin, which was, in the opinion of the troops, the most unpleasant place they had been in—bare desert with a road running through it and camp sites on both sides of the road, and water towers at intervals for scenery. Tents were pitched there the first day, and slit trenches dug, but on the second day a sandstorm blew most of the tents down.

After three weeks stay at Qassassin, the battalion moved to Faiyid close to the Great Bitter Lake, where it took over a standing camp, which was most comfortable, except for the flies, which were there in their millions, resulting in many cases of dysentery and stomach trouble among the troops. Eventually, mainly due to the efforts of Captain Ram Singh, the medical officer, it was discovered that the main breeding ground of these flies was among a dump of buried refuse, which must have been lying there for many months before the battalion arrived. Thereafter, the incidence of dysentery declined in an amazing way.

From then on, for the next 13 months the battalion guarded a large Prisoners of War Camp, the Italian internees' camp, and several other installations. The Prisoners of War camp had Italians varying in numbers from 7000 to 15000. Later, after the battle of Alamein, the Italians were sent elsewhere and they were replaced by Germans. One big liability was the guarding of a large Base Ordnance depot, which was very

dispersed, and had vast quantities of valuable and "attractive" stores, including, particularly, cloth of various kinds. Organised thieving had been going on for sometime before the battalion took over the guarding of it and as much as £ 3,000 worth of stuff stolen in a month had been known. Our sentries cut down the loss considerably, although a few thieves had to be shot in doing so. Another Base Ordnance depot at Tel-el-kebir was also guarded by the men of the battalion.

One amusing incident happened at the Prisoners of War camp when a German officer tried to walk out of the camp dressed in battle dress and a monocle (Lt.-Colonel Rogers, the C.O. of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry wore a monocle). He might have succeeded if he had been a little bolder and had used the main gate, as his disguise was good, and he knew enough Urdu to say "Darwaza kholo, jaldi karo". Unfortunately, that particular gate was seldom used by the C.O. and the N.C.O. in charge of the guard, becoming suspicious, arrested him.

There were a number of air raid warnings during May, June, and July, 1942, and many enemy planes flew over the camp, but they were usually on their way to Suez, and the bursting of the bombs and the sound of A.A. fire was clearly heard at Faiyid. During one of these air raid alarms, when there was a complete black-out, some Germans tried to escape, and one of our sentries shot two of them dead, killing them outside the wire before they had a chance to run, at a range of about 40 yards.

There were many other instances of Germans attempting to escape, but either being caught



Lieut.-Colonel H. B. Rogers , who commanded the Jodhpur Sardar
Infantry for over two Years while it served in Eritrea,
Egypt and Italy.

by our sentries or shot by them. There was one case of a German medical officer, who was reported as missing, being found by one of our men hidden between the upper and lower flies of a tent. The patches had been removed from his uniform, obviously in preparation for escape. A long trench was discovered one day, starting in a tent and reaching a point about 25 yards outside the wire. The end of the tunnel was close to the surface, and escape would probably have been attempted a day or two later. The battalion was complimented several times by the Area Commander on the excellent work it was carrying out in the guarding of the prisoners of war and the ordnance depots.

For a time, the battalion had a detachment guarding the airfield at Devasoir, some 12 miles away, in addition to its other heavy duties, but the protection of this airfield was taken over by American troops in December, 1942.

2nd.-Lieuts. Madho Singh, Moti Singh, and Kishan Singh, joined the battalion from India towards the end of 1942, and 2nd.-Lieut Guman Singh in April, 1943.

So, month after month, went on the dreadfully monotonous, although important, task of guarding Base Ordnance and Supply depots and many thousands of prisoners of war. Except for attempts of escape by the prisoners or thefts at the depots, nothing ever happened and nothing seemed likely to happen. By the beginning of May, 1943, the battalion had almost lost hope of ever getting a change from its static role, and the future appeared depressing and dreary.

Then, fate decided otherwise. On May 12th, 1943, without any previous warning, came a letter to say that the battalion had been chosen for an important operational role, and that seven independent companies were to be formed immediately, each with 2 officers and 3 platoons with a Liaison officer to accompany these companies.

The long period of apprenticeship for the battalion had ended. Adventure and excitement lay ahead.

PART II.

*The Landing at Salerno, Italy, September 1943,
and the invasion of Europe.*

WITHIN 48 hours of the receipt of orders, the battalion had left the camp on the bank of the Suez Canal, in which it had lived so long, and was settled temporarily in another one about two miles away. Never has a unit handed over its duties to another with so much pleasure.

The seven companies had to be ready in less than a fortnight and there was a lot to be done. Consequently, all was excitement and hustle. Four companies existed, of course. The remaining three had to be formed from the Headquarter Company, and from the reinforcements, which, fortunately, were with the battalion and not in a reinforcement camp.

The seven companies of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry were formed as follows:—

83 Company	Captain Deep Singh Lieut. Moti Singh	Rajput.
84 Company	Captain Magni Ram Lieut. Nanu Ram	Jat.
85 Company	Captain Dungar Singh 2nd.-Lieut. Guman Singh.	Rajput.
86 Company	Captain Mohan Ram Lieut. Gopal Ram	Jat.
87 Company	Lieut. Pehap Singh 2nd.-Lieut. Sawai Singh.	Rajput.

88 Company Captain Ramcharan Singh Jat.
 Lieut. Kishan Singh.

89 Company Captain Raiwat Singh Rajput
 Lieut. Madho Singh and Jat.

Lt.-Colonel H. B. Rogers, Officer Commanding, Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, with Captain Jaithu Singh, Adjutant, and Lieut. Hamir Singh, Quartermaster, remained at Faiyid, later moving to a camp at Mina, just outside Cairo.

All the carefully selected and trained specialist platoons had to be broken up, and all that could be kept back against the day when the battalion should reform, were some N.C.O instructors and a fair proportion of the drivers and mechanics. All personnel had to be equipped to full war scale, and much clothing and equipment, which had been good enough for guard duties, was not fit for active service. A lot of new clothing and equipment had to be drawn and issued, new vehicles had to be collected and run in, and a great deal of paper work accomplished before the companies could leave, but it was done in the time allotted without a grouse out of anyone except the C.O., Lt.-Colonel H. B. Rogers, and a few of the others who were left behind, and even they did not interrupt their work to grouse. In addition, the companies did some pretty strenuous P.T. on hills near their new camp, to take the edge off their softness, and this turned out to be extremely useful in the training that followed.

On June 2nd, the companies moved by rail from Faiyid to Aartouz, Syria. Major Ram Singh, the 2nd-in-Command, left with them as

liaison officer, and was actually in command of the whole party which formed a very large detachment from the unit. This arrangement saved a lot of trouble over administration and discipline and was welcomed by Colonel Ralston, the Commanding Officer of No. 35 Beach Group, of which all the companies were to form a part.

No. 35 Beach Group was composed of a small detachment from the Royal Navy, a battalion of the Durham Light Infantry, the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, units of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and Royal Army Service Corps, and a Medical unit.

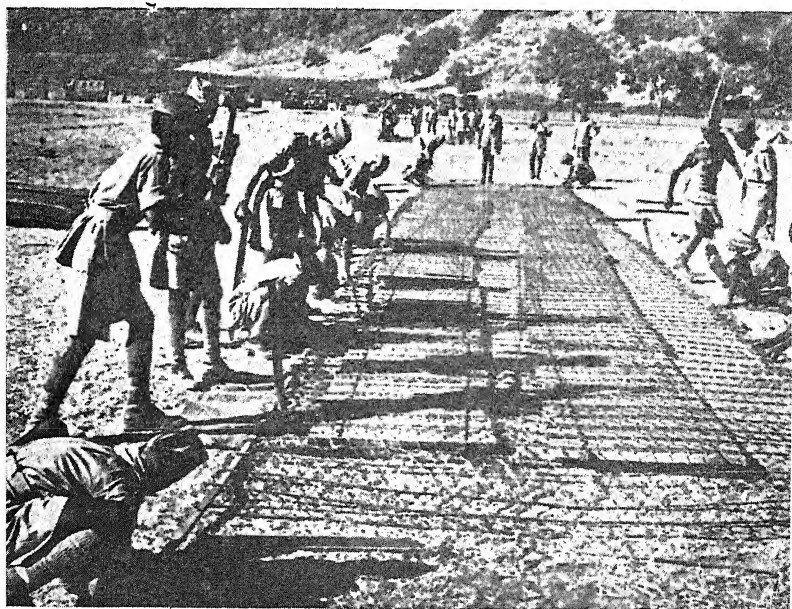
A Beach Group is a very complex formation whose sole object is to supply and feed an invading force, and so enable it to fight, until such time as it has been able to capture a port and get it working, when these functions devolve on the normal port organisations. The Beach Group follows immediately after the first assaulting troops, and organises the beaches that have been captured by these troops to receive and issue to them, and to other troops who follow, all the ammunition, stores and supplies that are required by a modern army. The work is highly technical, and needs serious and strenuous training for everyone, for on the Beach Group depends the success or failure of the invasion at that place. Every unit and sub-unit, every officer and man in the Beach Group must know his own job really thoroughly, for a Beach Group is just like a delicate and complicated machine, and its working depends on the efficient and smooth functioning of every part. The particular job of the battalion was to work

the beaches, for which five companies were detailed, the ammunition depot, which had one company, and the supply depot, which had another company. The preliminary training was carried out in Syria many miles from the sea or any water, and though this may sound all wrong, the basic training received there was most valuable. There, too, the Beach Group became a complete machine, and its various parts got to know each other and to work smoothly and well with each other. Training was hard, and included a lot of work in the Syrian mountains nearby, in addition to the purely technical training. Comfort was conspicuous by its absence, and all ranks soon learned to go for long periods and distances with little or nothing in the way of food and water and rest. But, from the Beach Group Commander down, everyone was as keen as mustard, for all knew that they were going to take part in the greatest adventure of this war, the invasion of Hitler's Fortress of Europe. The training was completed at the Combined Training Centre at Kabreet in Egypt, and there the men learned to handle the actual craft and apparatus that had been designed and produced for this job. The final exercise here was the next best thing to a real invasion, and was a genuine test for the whole Beach Group. Things went so smoothly and easily that the exercise ended 24 hours earlier than had been planned.

Then came another surprise, an order to proceed to North Africa. This was heartily welcomed, for it promised quicker action than remaining in the Middle East till other Beach Groups had been trained, and the battalion was extremely anxious to get down to business



The Jodhpur Sardar Infantry bathing in the Mediterranean
near Bougie, Algeria.



The Jodhpur Sardar Infantry practising track laying at Bougie, Algeria.

as soon as possible. All ranks were "fighting fit", and anything that promised to shorten the period between training and action was welcome. In mid-July, the battalion went to a rest camp near Alexandria for three days, and then embarked on the "S.S. Talma".

The voyage was uneventful and it took five days to reach Sfax in Tunisia where the battalion disembarked. From Sfax, it went by train—a long and uncomfortable journey—and arrived at the North African Combined Training Centre near Bougie in Algeria.

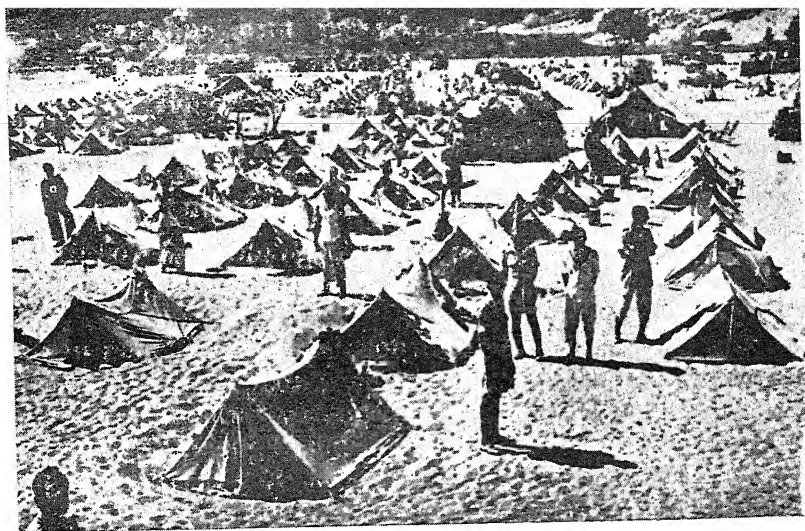
On the very day the battalion embarked at Alexandria, Brigadier R. C. Duncan, Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, arrived at Cairo by air from India. G.H.Q. Middle East, however, arranged for him to stay at Cairo for a fortnight, and to fly to Algiers, whence he journeyed by car for about eight hours. With him went Lt.-Colonel H.B. Rogers, officer commanding, Jodhpur Sardar Infantry. The first part of the drive followed the shore of the Mediterranean, which was looking its best—blue and calm. Then the road left the sea, and they drove over the hills through forests of cork trees and past vineyards. The scenery was magnificent and unforgettable.

It had been known in the battalion that Brigadier Duncan intended to visit the unit while it was in Egypt, but as he had not arrived before the departure of the battalion for North Africa, the men thought that there was no chance of seeing him, and his arrival by car was quite unexpected. He and Colonel Rogers got a great welcome. They stayed the night there and dined

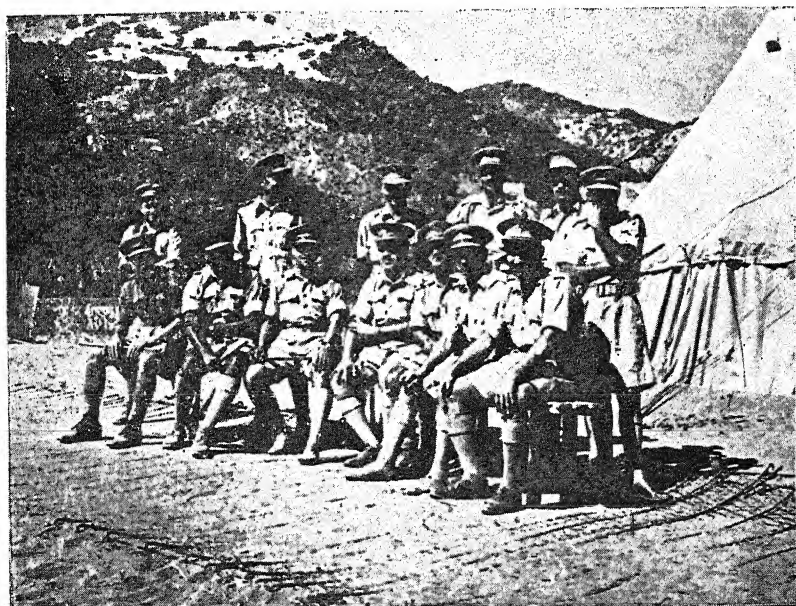
with the officers. The next morning Brigadier Duncan inspected the battalion on parade, and addressed all ranks, and wished them luck in the great adventure before them.

The battalion trained for a couple of weeks, to get used to the equipment and methods used in that theatre, and did a final exercise that tested out the Beach Group's efficiency. Then it moved to the divisional concentration area at Bizerta, where a divisional exercise was carried out. This was scheduled to last for three days. Things went so well that it was called off after 48 hours. To those who knew, this exercise gave the first hint of the actual place at which the troops were destined to land, for the beaches and country round Salerno were very like the beaches and country over which this exercise was carried out. The battalion, however, was still in the dark as to its destination, since none of the men had been in Italy before and had, therefore, no knowledge of what the country there was like. The battalion had its first experience of a heavy air raid here, which lasted about two hours, and it was lucky to escape with only three casualties, none of them fatal.

Final preparations were then the order of the day. Every scrap of kit that was not absolutely essential had to be left behind, and nothing that could not be carried on the man could be taken. This applied to officers as well as men, and there was a lot of discussion over small articles which seemed to weigh nothing at all and promised extra comfort. At last, however, everything that was not absolutely essential was dumped with what was euphemistically called "heavy kit". The sick list was carefully gone over with the



Bivouac of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry at Bougie, Algeria,
North Africa, on the shores of the Mediterranean.



The State Officers of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry at Bougie, Algeria,
North Africa, taken just before the battalion embarked
for the invasion of Italy.

Medical Officer, and those who were not quite certain to be fit within a couple of days were left, to their intense disappointment. And the company trucks were sent by road to the Combined Training Centre. The troops marched to the assembly area carrying all that they possessed and not knowing when they would see their "heavy kit" again, and cooking pots and water followed in two 3-ton lorries.

At the assembly area came the detailing of parties of troops to the actual craft in which they would sail for Italy. The battalion was to travel in landing ships Tank (LST's) and landing craft Tank (LCT's), the difference between these being in size and the ability to undertake a longer voyage without refuelling. There was no question of keeping companies, or even platoons, intact. They had to go where they could be fitted in so as to arrive at the right time. The companies were attached to the various brigades of the division which formed part of the landing force, and they eventually found themselves in eight different LST's and LCT's. Captains Dungar Singh, Deep Singh, and Raiwat Singh found themselves in command of troops in three LCT's in which the bulk of their respective companies were travelling; there was a platoon by itself in another serial, a party of 18 men under a havildar in yet another, and Major Ram Singh was alone with the Commander of the Forward Maintenance Centre — alone, that is, as far as the battalion was concerned. His serial was the earliest of all the numbers, since he was to be the first to land.

The battalion spent five days in the assembly area, organised into respective serial numbers,

and then came the business of embarking. This took three days, and if anyone thinks that is excessive, let him try and arrange to get a large number of men and vehicles and a lot of equipment into some six hundred craft of various sizes and capacities. The task of embarking the force called for first class staff work, for every man and vehicle and gun had to be at the right place at the right time, and the time tables produced for this part of the operation must have caused a lot of headaches before they were right. But right they were, and embarkation was completed without a hitch, which says a lot for the way in which those time tables must have been checked and re-checked and checked again by the various staff officers concerned. After embarkation, the whole force remained in harbour, or in an adjacent lake, for two more days. There was another heavy air raid, but the battalion had no casualties. The barrage from the various anti-aircraft weapons needed to be seen to be believed, and it undoubtedly had the effect of keeping the enemy out of range altogether, or so high that his aim was futile.

On the third day after embarkation had been completed, the first convoy, which contained the LCT's, sailed. They had to spend a night in Sicily to refuel. The remainder of the battalion waited another day before sailing, and then followed the first convoy. The convoy was a most impressive sight, for the sea seemed full of ships, and one could not help thinking of Goebbel's boast that the allies could not invade because they had not the ships. The ships were American-manned, and there was a lot of mixing on board, despite

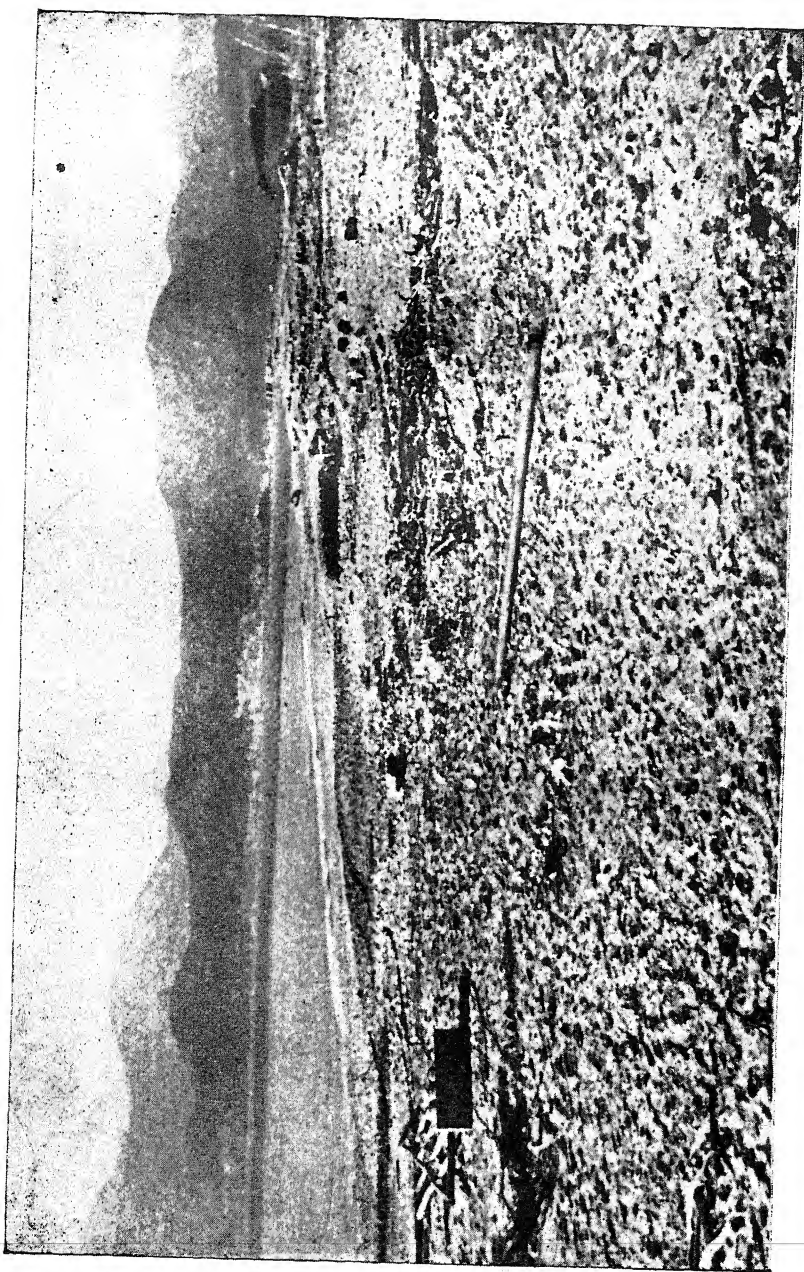
the fact that the men were packed rather like sardines. The troops found the Americans very friendly and co-operative, and the men swapped cigarettes and food and jokes. Neither side understood the other's language, but smiles and gestures sufficed to make meanings clear enough. On September 8th, there was an air raid by a solitary enemy machine late in the afternoon. Only four bombs were dropped, but one unluckily hit a ship, which sank in about two minutes. The convoy was also attacked by U-boats; three was the figure generally talked of, but there may have been more. One was certainly destroyed, and those who were lucky saw it. It seems incredible that the rest could have got away undamaged. Finally, there was a heavy air raid about half past nine that night, without result as far as was known. But there was now no doubt left in the minds of anyone that they were expected, and were in for a pretty hot reception.

The battalion arrived in Salerno Bay just after midnight on the night of September 8/9th, to be greeted with the astonishing news of Italy's unconditional surrender. This was accompanied by orders not to open fire till ordered and, as zero hour for the first wave of assault troops was 0330 hours, two American officers went ashore to reconnoitre. Before they returned, the convoy was attacked from the air and also fired on from the shore, which indicated that whatever the Italians might have done, we were not to have things all our own way.

The American officers returned about half past two with the news that Germans were in position to resist the landing, so the naval

bombardment started according to plan—a most impressive sight and sound. The assault troops went off and landed at 0330 hours, and a quarter of an hour later, the first success signal went up indicating that they held the beach. Beach Group Headquarters and some other elements of that formation went ashore before dawn, and at 0645 hours Major Ram Singh, with Major Blakeman, who commanded the Forward Maintenance Centre, set foot on the shores of Europe's mainland. There was a lot of shelling, chiefly 88 m.m, and machine gun fire from the ground, but almost all of it went just over the heads of people on the actual beach, Red Beach, as it was called. There was also a lot of machine gunning from enemy aircraft, but this was being constantly interfered with by our own air cover. Fighting was still going on quite close to the beaches, though the actual beaches themselves were in our hands, and had already started to function. Vehicles were coming ashore and moving off to their assembly areas, roads were being made or improved, mines were being lifted and the gaps in the minefields widened, wire netting track was being laid, "drowned" vehicles were being towed out and resuscitated, and a hundred and one activities were in progress. To an uninitiated observer, there seemed to be indescribable confusion, yet every man knew what he was doing and why he was doing it, and the good work was going steadily forward.

Throughout the day, as the various serials came on to the beach, platoons of various companies disembarked and moved at once to their assembly areas, and from there to their bivouac areas. In at least two cases, these latter had not yet been cleared of the enemy, but temporary



The beaches at Salerno where the landing was made by the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry.

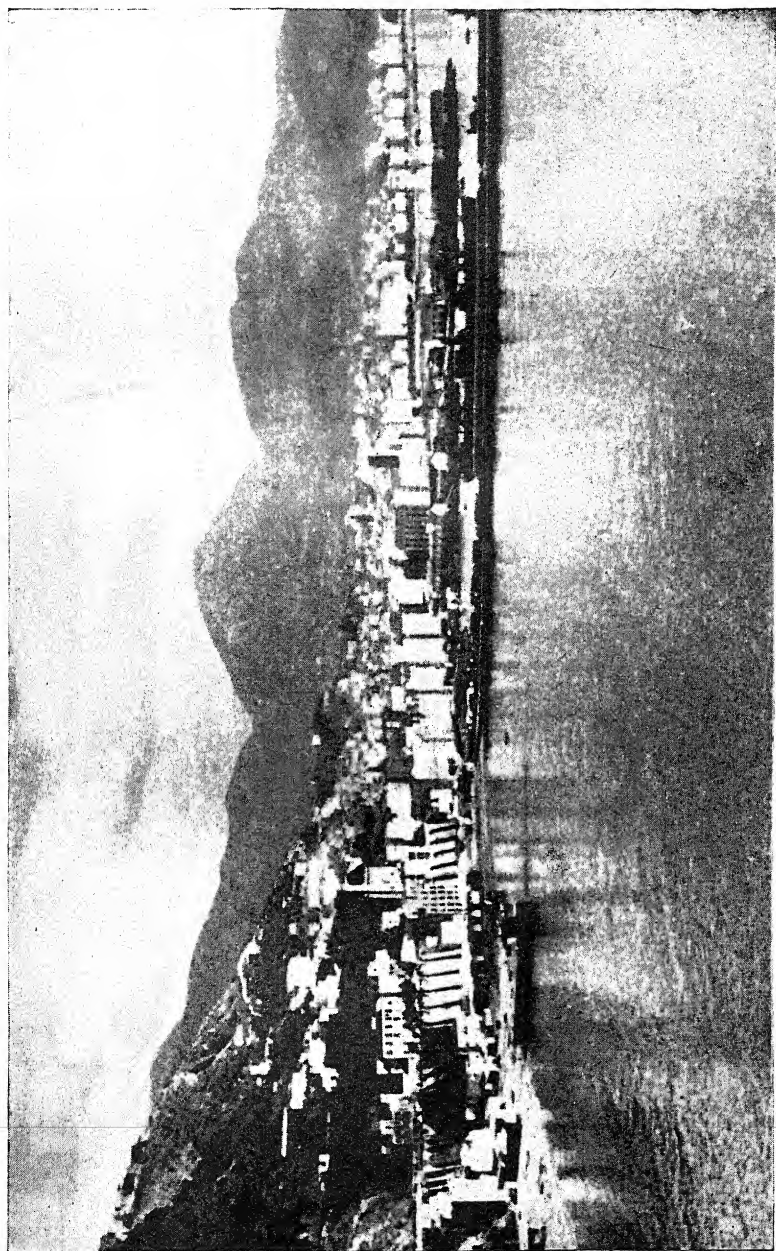
areas had been detailed before the troops arrived, and there was no confusion. The three LCT's commanded by Captains Dungar Singh, Deep Singh, and Raiwat Singh were due to disembark at Green Beach, just South of Red Beach, during the afternoon, but the craft were driven off with some casualties, though our men escaped. Late in the evening, these three craft went to yet another beach by mistake, and all landed there independently. The error was very soon discovered by the officers, and these spent a long time trying to get to their right place, but failed because the enemy still held positions between them and the rest of the Beach Group. Troops found areas where they could squat for what was left of the night without interfering with the work of the Beach Group on that beach, and in the very early morning the officers found that the way was clear, and marched their respective troops to the battalion's area, where they started work at once.

During the night, the Liaison Officer had received a request for two extra companies, under the impression that all had arrived, but he had to refuse this request. It was the first and last he refused during the time the battalion was there. Later, that morning, the last company came ashore, and all were then busy at their special jobs. Up to date, despite shelling, machine gun fire from both ground and air, and bombing, the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry had not had a single casualty.

For the next 17 days, all companies were working at top pressure at the special work for which they had been trained. The five beach companies cleared LCT's and LST's as soon as

they arrived on shore, dumping the ammunition, stores, etc., on the beach in its right place, while other parties from beach companies loaded this into lorries to be taken to the beach ammunition depot, or to whatever depot it belonged. There, two other companies of the battalion, who had trained with the specialist personnel of the service to which the depot belonged, unloaded it and stacked it by categories, and issued it as required to units as and when their transport came to collect it. This went on day and night without ceasing.

The most difficult part of the training had been the recognition of all types of ammunition or stores, or rations, in the dark, with no light to help at all. But it is surprising what practice and determination can do, and long before the battalion had arrived in North Africa, the men were actually better at recognising the different ammunition types and packs than the Ordnance specialists in a night competition, the Ordnance depot company of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry had beaten the regular Ordnance men badly, much to the latter's disgust, but much to the joy of their O.C. There were other things to deal with and clear from the beaches, too — wire, road signboards, poles galore of apparently all lengths, tubular scaffolding and the kerosene tins filled with cement in which the scaffolding is set so as to avoid having to dig holes for it, boxes and packing cases of all sorts and sizes, and vehicles of every conceivable kind. Most of the latter, of course, drove off the craft, but some had to be man-handled off, and some stuck in the water, not fully waterproofed. Nothing came amiss to beach companies, whose principle was to get the craft away empty for another load as quickly as



VIEW OF SALERNO.

possible, and to clear the beach for the next craft to come in.

The companies were lucky in having "dry" landings, that is, the craft could come right into the beach, and let down their ramps on the beach so we had no water gap to negotiate. The men in two 12-hour shifts, and the shift on duty was always standing by at the beach even if there was no craft in and nothing more to clear from the beach. In the intervals our men helped make roads, pushed vehicles that had got stuck in mud or sand, guarded prisoners and did anything that they were asked to do, knowing that anything they did was helping the general effort. The beaches were shelled and machine-gunned from the ground and bombed and machine-gunned from the air daily for 17 days, but nothing stopped the work. When the men did sleep, it was at the bottom of slit trenches that were mostly wet and muddy. Frequently there was a call for extra men to get craft cleared, when too many were in at one time for the shift on duty to cope with, and then the shift off went back as soon as it could get there and worked till all was clear again. The average worked was over 14 hours daily for the whole of this period and the tonnage put through the beaches was nearly three times what had been estimated could be cleared. There was no time to grouse, even if the men had wanted to do so. They were all kept busier than they had ever been before in their lives.

The most astounding thing was the luck over casualties. The battalion had only one man evacuated during the whole of its stay on those beaches, and he was deafened by an 88 m.m.

shell that burst over his head. Shells burst near the men and no one was touched, and the only time the enemy did manage to get direct hits on parties of our men, the shells that landed in among the parties hit no one and failed to explode. And on at least two occasions shell-bursts near our parties failed to harm anyone, but caused casualties among some pioneers who were further away in a direct line from the burst.

Our men did a few other things, too, that relieved the monotony, and they did not grumble because these came out of their "rest" 12 hours. Several patrols were sent to search areas suspected of harbouring enemy machine-guns that were being a nuisance. They rounded up prisoners and took them to the cages. They watched air combats galore when they were not actually doing something else; their own air cover was wonderful, and very re-assuring.

But the best job fell to Captain Dungar Singh and 60 men of his company. They went up to the H.Q. of a battalion that was holding a position in some particularly steep and difficult country, and took ammunition and supplies and water from Bn. H.Q. to the forward companies, and that really was thrilling. No vehicle could get anywhere near these companies, and man-pack was the only alternative. Those sixty men took up the ammunition without which the positions could not have been held, and brought back casualties to the regimental aid post, and took up more ammunition and so on for 48 hours with little food and no rest. But the job was done, and the officer commanding the unit told the battalion and Beach Group H.Q.

that the job could not have done without the help of our party.

The divisional and brigade commanders both wrote thanking the battalion for the valuable work that party had done. Here too, the luck of our men over casualties held, and they got off scot-free.

The following letters of commendation on the work carried out by Captain Dungar Singh and his party will be of interest:—

Headquarters,
46 Division.
25th September, 1943.

To

Colonel J.A.E. Ralston, O.B.E.,
H.Q., 35 Beach Group.

Captain Dungar Singh together with the 60 men of No. 85 Company Jodhpur Infantry under his command are today returning to you.

I am most grateful to you for lending me their services at short notice and at a time when you could ill spare them.

I should particularly like to set on record what magnificent work they have done under most difficult circumstances. Not only have they carried heavy loads for long distances up and down hills by the roughest of tracks, but on their return journeys have always called in at R.A.P's, etc., and *offered* to carry wounded back.

Everyone who has come in contact with them, has remarked on their fine work and their cheerful demeanour.

Yours ever,
J.L.I. Hawkesworth,
Major-General,
Comd. 46 Division.

To

O.C., 85 Company, Jodhpur Infantry.

I wish to convey to you, and to your troops the appreciation by 139 Brigade of the valuable assistance provided by your carrying parties during our recent advance over difficult country.

All units under my command have spoken in the highest terms of the willing co-operation of all officers and men, and of the hard work put in by them, which enabled forward positions to be maintained where wheeled transport was unable to operate.

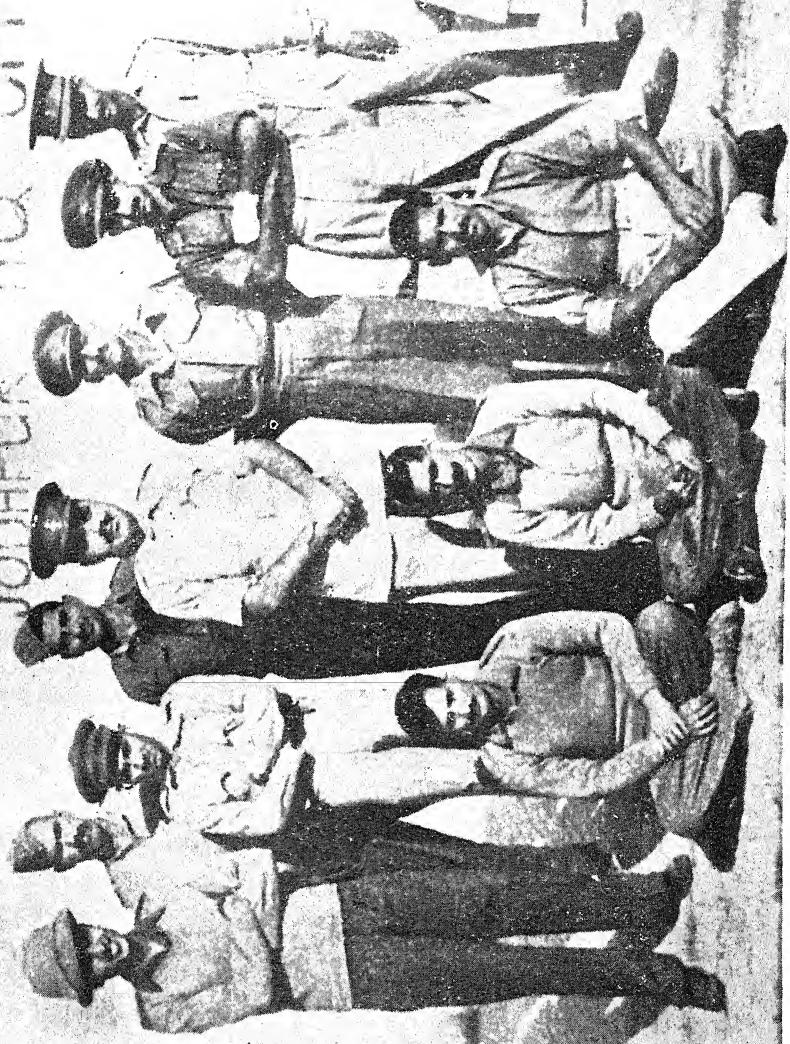
Sd/- R.E.M. Stott,
Field. Brigadier,
27th September, 1943. Comd., 139 Inf. Bde.

To

O.C., Detachment, Jodhpur Sardar Infantry.

Your soldiers have worked extremely well carrying stores for a long period over very difficult country.

JODHPUR HQ OFFICE



They have had no food today except for a few biscuits.

They say that they would rather walk back than wait for transport to lift them.

Language has been a difficulty. Would you please tell them how much I appreciate the splendid work they have done.

Sd/-.....

Lt.-Col.,

25th September, 1943. Comd. 5th Bn. Foresters.

In the whole 17 days—18 from the day the first troops landed—they had only the one man evacuated for deafness due to a shell burst, and eight slight wounds that were not bad enough to cause recipients even to lose an hour from duty.

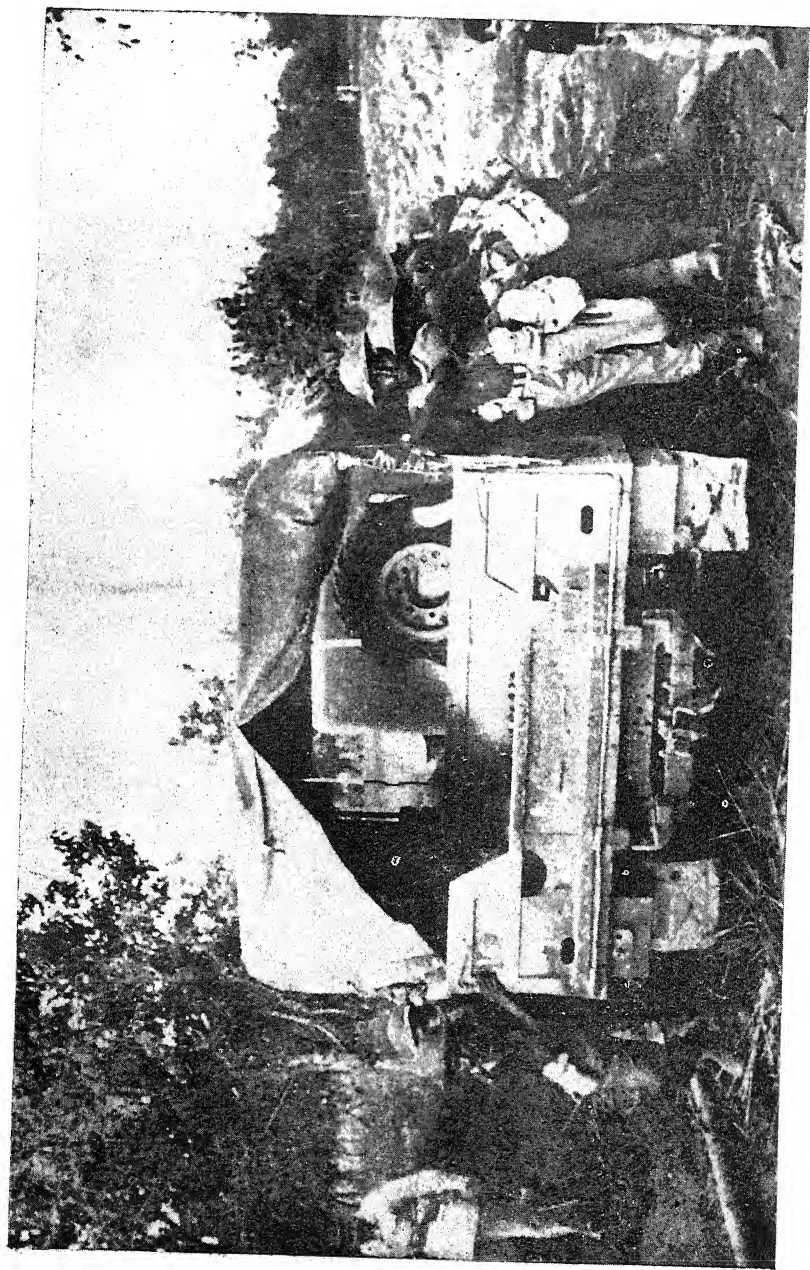
Food was somewhat difficult from the beginning. For the first nine days, biscuits and jam were their stand-by, supplemented by fruit and vegetables from gardens near the beaches when these had been captured. Then they got some English flour (which they did not like as well as atta) and ghee, and things gradually improved after that. But meat was not forthcoming, and it was not till after they had got to Salerno itself that they managed to buy a couple of sheep, for six and four pounds respectively. Despite the price, they were not very big sheep, but they gave a decent meal.

Working entirely with British (and American) troops and officers, the officers of the battalion

had always to be on hand to interpret, and they were very hard worked in consequence. But everyone pulled together wonderfully, and, when, later, the companies were visited by the C. O. and a Staff Officer from the Middle East, no one uttered a syllable of complaint of any kind. The job was what mattered to all, always and all the time, and nothing could be allowed to interfere in any way with the effort that was making a success of that job.

By September 27th, Salerno had been captured and was beginning to function as a port, and pressure on the beaches slackened. Despite the fears that the news appeared to convey at that time, the invasion had been accomplished, and the invading force had advanced and been reinforced and was still advancing. The special task of the battalion was done. On September 27th and the two following days, four companies moved to Salerno town, leaving three companies to deal with the ammunition of all kinds, the petrol and the supplies and stores which still remained unissued. Later, these companies, too, moved to billets in Salerno, and they were not sorry to leave the now thoroughly water-logged and cut up bivouac areas where they had lived for a month, more or less.

The Fifth Army continued to advance, and the Beach Group which had helped to put it ashore and maintain it there was left behind. There was still plenty of work to be done—there always is in the wake of an advancing army—but it was not the work for which the battalion had been specially trained, and the spice of danger was absent.



Men of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry find it sticky going in Italy after the rain.

So ended the historic landing of the Fifth Army at Salerno. The Jodhpur Sardar Infantry had played its part and a not unimportant one, and it is believed that the men of the battalion were the first Indian troops to land on the mainland of Europe.

His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India sent the following letter to His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur on November 17th, 1943:—

“I have just read the most stirring account of the behaviour in action at Salerno of the Jodhpur Infantry. It was written on October 24th by Lt.-Colonel Rogers to Brigadier Duncan.

I know you must be as proud as I was to read of their courage and endurance.

Please accept my congratulations and best wishes for their future”.

His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur replied as under:—

“Due to my illness I regret I have not been able to acknowledge receipt of Your Excellency's kind letter of congratulations of November 17th, 1943, about the Jodhpur Infantry's baptism of fire on European soil.

I am naturally very proud to learn that they have upheld the traditions of my State Forces, and I hope they will continue to maintain this standard,

On behalf of myself and my Forces, I take this opportunity of expressing our thanks for the interest Your Excellency has always taken in my troops and I will, on the first opportunity, convey the contents of your letter to the Jodhpur Infantry."

His Majesty The King later approved of the following awards to officers and Indian other ranks of the battalion for gallantry during the landing at Salerno:—

Major Ram Singh	.. D.S.O.
Captain Dungar Singh	.. M.C.
Jemadar Ganga Ram	.. M.B.E.
Q.M. Hav. Bhoora Ram	.. M.M.
Naik Shaitan Singh	.. M.M.
L/Naik Kishore Singh	.. M.M.

while the following were "Mentioned in Dispatches":—

Captain Magni Ram.
 Lieut. Moti Singh.
 Jemadar Dungar Singh.
 Jemadar Jodha Ram.
 Jemadar Kishna Ram.
 Coy. Hav. Major Thakur Ram.
 Naik Shivnarayan Singh.
 Naik Pusha Ram.
 Naik Magha Ram.
 Naik Prahlad Singh.
 Naik Khet Singh.
 L/Naik Narana Ram.
 L/Naik Kishna Ram.
 Sepoy Bagh Singh.
 Sepoy Jawahir Singh.
 Sepoy Mod Singh.
 Sepoy Amara Ram.

Officers and Indian Other ranks of the Jodhpur Sardar
Infantry who were awarded decorations
for gallantry in Italy.



Major Dungan Singh, M. C.

Jem. Parbhu Singh, M. C.



Citations for the awards to Officers and Indian Other Ranks of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry for gallantry during the landing at SALERNO, September 1943.

1. Ty. Major K. RAM SINGH....D.S.O.
SALERNO Beach. September 9th—27th, 1943.

He was Liaison Officer in command of 7, companies of this Unit in No. 35 Beach Group and he performed exceptionally fine work throughout the whole of this difficult period. His cool courage, his tirelessness, and his constant cheerfulness were a wonderful example to all, and were unquestionably largely responsible for the excellent work of the companies. In particular, he was untiring in visiting troops who were under heavier fire than usual, regardless of his personal safety, and he thus maintained that personal touch which is so much appreciated by Indian troops.

2. Ty. Captain DUNGAR SINGH....M.C.
SALERNO. September 22nd—25th, 1943.

With 60 men of his company he was sent to carry ammunition and supplies from battalion Headquarters to the forward companies of a British unit which was closely engaged. The country was precipitous, and was mostly under enemy observation and mortar and M. G. fire. This officer himself reconnoitred routes for his parties, and throughout displayed great personal courage and fine leadership, earning

praise from Corps, Division and Brigade Commanders for his own and his company's work in exceptionally difficult circumstances.

3. Jemadar GANGA RAM.....M.B.E.
SALERNO Beach, September 11th, 1943.

His platoon had been working hard under almost continuous air attacks for 8 hours, but more lorries were still arriving. This I.O. collected two N.C.Os and the three challenged the remainder of the platoon in teams of 6, and the competition thus started resulted in the platoon working for 4 hours more at increased speed and regardless of danger. His initiative and leadership and his personal example prevented a hold-up in POL supplies at a critical time.

4. No. 1783 Coy. Q. M. Hav. BHOORA RAM..M.M
SALERNO Beach. September 12th, 1943.

When a member of an officer's patrol detailed to search an overgrown area known to be mined and suspected of harbouring enemy LMG's, he volunteered to reconnoitre the route through the mined area, and by doing so, successfully, saved casualties to his patrol. Later, he twice voluntarily searched tricky areas. He showed a high sense of duty and great personal courage.

Officers and Indian Other ranks of the Jodhpur Sardar
Infantry who were awarded decorations
for gallantry in Italy.



Jem. Bhura Ram, M. M.



Jem. Ganga Ram, M. B. E.



Hav. Shaitan Singh, M. M.



Nk. Kishore Singh, M. M.

5. No. 1503 WS/Naik SHAITAN SINGH....M.M.
SALERNO. September 24th, 1943.

In precipitous country N.E. of the town, a forward British company was in urgent need of ammunition, food and water. Its whereabouts were not accurately known at the time, but the route was under enemy mortar and M.G. fire. This NCO led a party of 16 men, all heavily laden, to the company's position, thereby enabling it to hold on. He brought his party back safely after 22 hours, during which it had no water and practically no food. His tenacity, courage and leadership were beyond praise.

6. No. 1811 L/Naik KISHORE SINGH....M.M.
SALERNO. September 24th, 1943.

He was 2nd-in-Command of a party of 16 carrying ammunition, food and water to a forward British company over precipitous country which was under mortar and M.G. fire. The party took 22 hours to accomplish its mission and return, and the example of this junior NCO and his able backing of his commander were, in part, responsible for the successful accomplishment of this important task.

PART III.

Italy and Sicily

DURING the whole of October 1943, the seven companies of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry remained at Salerno, guarding the docks, the railway station, a Prisoners of War cage, and the *Banka da Italia*. Early in November, however, all the companies, except 85 company (Captain Dungar Singh), which was left behind at Salerno, were transferred to Eastern Italy.

84, 87, and 88 companies (Captains Magni Ram, Pehap Singh, and Ramcharan Singh respectively) went to Foggia, and came temporarily into the 8th Army, 88 company later moving to San Salvo and Vasto. 83, 86 and 89 companies (Captains Deep Singh, Mohan Ram, and Raiwat Singh respectively) went to Bari and came under H.Q., No. 2 District. On November 27th, 85 company (Captain Dungar Singh) left Salerno for Bari. On the departure of this company, the O.C., 372 P. of W camp, C.M.F., sent the following message:—

“To-

O.C., 85 company, Jodhpur Sardar Infantry.

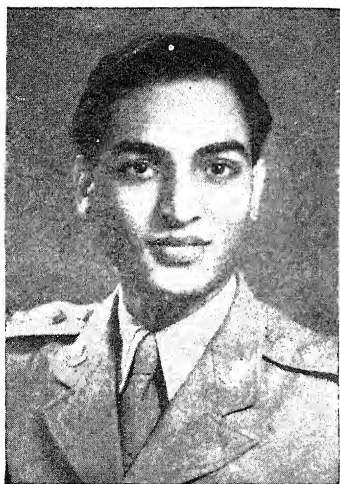
On behalf of all ranks of this unit, I would like to express our appreciation of the way in which guards were provided, and of the smartness, good turn-out, and behaviour of your men at all times.”

On December 1st, 1943, there was a very heavy enemy air raid on Bari, when a number

Officers and Indian Other ranks of the Jodhpur Sardar
Infantry who were mentioned in dispatches for
gallant and distinguished conduct in Italy.



Major Magni Ram



Lt. Moti Singh



Capt. Ramcharan Singh

of ships in the harbour were sunk. Our three companies stationed there, suffered casualties, 8 men of 83 company, and 1 man of 85 company being wounded.

Early in December, 83, 85, 86, and 89 companies were transferred from Bari to Barletta and came under the orders of the Comdr. 151 sub-area, being relieved at Bari by the 4/10th Baluch Regiment, while 84 and 87 companies left Foggia for Vasto and Termoli for L of C duties.

All this time, Headquarters and the remnants of the battalion had remained in Egypt much to their disgust, but on December 4th, 1943, they left Alexandria in the "H.M.T. Neuralia", arriving at Taranto five days later, whence they proceeded to Barletta. Captain Dhonkal Singh was in charge of the party, owing to the fact that Lt.-Colonel H.B. Rogers, Officer Commanding, Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, had left Cairo by air for India on November 3rd, on a month's liaison visit to Jodhpur.

Bn. H.Q., less Major Ram Singh, who had gone on ahead, moved from Taranto to Barletta in two parties, the rail party under Captain Dhonkal Singh and the road party in about 50 vehicles under Captain Jaithu Singh. It was drizzling with rain, so that the battalion drivers, used to the dry Egyptian roads, found some difficulty and two vehicles skidded badly and overturned, but luckily no one was injured. The convoy reached Barletta at sunset, and the rail party arrived an hour later.

The battalion now came under the orders of Colonel Calwell, Commander 151 Area, and on

December 31st, 1943, Lt.-Colonel H.B. Rogers arrived by air from India and resumed command. At this time, 83 and 86 companies found guards for Barletta town and were accommodated in Windsor barracks, while 85 and 89 companies guarded a large petrol dump, the former company being billeted at Canosa in a large house, beautifully furnished. 84 company was at Vasto with the 8th Army.

About a month later, Bn. H.Q. moved from Barletta to a large five-storied country house near Andria, which was also particularly well furnished—long mirrors, dressing tables, canopied beds, sofas, etc., were there in abundance. A long avenue lined by poplar trees led to the house, and there was a beautiful garden. The whole place was most comfortable. It was at once named “Jodhpur House” and the battalion flag was hoisted on the roof. Here the C.O. and Bn. H.Q. Staff used to entertain the Area H.Q. Staff and the officers of other units stationed nearby, and on Saturday evenings the battalion pipe band played outside.

Towards the end of May, the battalion left Italy by companies, and by June 1st, 1944, it was collected in Sicily. Battalion H.Q. and 3 companies were at Syracuse, accommodated in a good tented camp, while the remaining company was at Augusta, some 15 miles away. The battalion now came under the orders of the Commander, 56 Area, No. 1 District.

On June 2nd, 1944, Lt.-Colonel H.B. Rogers handed over the command of the battalion to Lt.-Colonel C.A.S. Melville, 6th Rajputana Rifles,

Officers and Indian Other ranks of the Jodhpur Sardar
Infantry who were mentioned in dispatches for
gallant and distinguished conduct in Italy.



Sub. Dungar Singh



Sub. Jodha Ram



Jem. Kishna Ram.

and left Sicily for Egypt on his return to India. Lt.-Colonel Rogers took over command of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry from Lt.-Colonel Thakur Jawahir Singh at Massawa, Eritrea, on March 15th, 1941, so that he had commanded it for over three years. Lt.-Colonel Rogers did a tremendous lot for the battalion during the period of his command. He was a forceful character and a strict disciplinarian, but he invariably tempered business with justice, and he had a great sense of right and wrong. He never spared himself and during the whole time he was in command, he did everything possible towards the efficiency of the battalion and he had the welfare of his men constantly at heart. Much of the credit for the battalion being selected to form part of No. 35 Beach Group should go to him, for he had not only brought the battalion to a high state of efficiency, and had done much to maintain morale when the battalion was employed for 13 months on the dull job of guarding prisoners, installations, and Supply depots in Egypt, but he had consistently pushed the claims for the employment of the battalion in a more active role. He was also mainly responsible for the recognition accorded to the battalion for its good work during the landing at Salerno, resulting in the grant of awards to officers and other ranks. If he had not later continually pressed for the return of the companies, which were scattered at various places in Eastern Italy, on guard duty, in order to get the battalion concentrated to carry out a period of training, the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry would almost certainly have continued to be employed on guard duty, and would not have been given the opportunity of joining a fighting formation in the forward area.

It was hoped that some intensive collective training could now be carried out. However, such was not to be the case, as a large number of men were required for various duties, so that no more than two companies were available for training at a time. The duties were the usual L of C ones—guarding ordnance and ammunition dumps, petrol storage depots, etc.

The initial difficulty was a lack of equipment. However, by dint of much agitation, a certain amount of equipment was received, and some useful training was carried out.

In July, Lt.-Colonel Melville and 5 officers went to Italy for a month's attachment to the 10th Indian Division in the front line, which was of the greatest benefit. On their return, they found a training team consisting of Major J. Shaw, 8th Punjab Regiment and 2 British officers of the 16th Punjab Regiment, had temporarily joined the battalion.

The battalion was relieved of several duties, some 6 pdr. guns and P.I.A.T. guns, and some 48 wireless sets were received, so that it was possible to get down to training in earnest. Some very useful exercises were carried out in co-operation with the heavy and light A. A. regiments at Augusta. There was one scheme run on a company basis as a battle inoculation. The company advanced on its objective, a high precipitous ridge, with support from the battalion mortars, a battery of 3.7 heavy A.A. guns and a battery of light A.A. guns. Live ammunition was used with the guns firing over the men's heads, and the men kept well up to the shell burst.

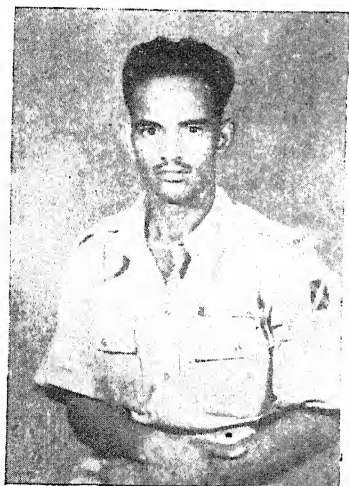
Officers and Indian Other ranks of the Jodhpur Sardar
Infantry who were mentioned in dispatches for
gallant and distinguished conduct in Italy.



Jem. Thakur Ram



Hav. Shivnarayan Singh



Hav. Pahalad Singh



Hav. Amara Ram.

The climate and the scenery in the neighbourhood of Syracuse were glorious, and the men kept remarkably fit. The beaches were sandy and the men thoroughly enjoyed the sea bathing. Many of the officers went on shikar trips, which were most successful and enjoyable, and the officers used to go to the officers' club most evenings and learnt to dance with the Italian girls. As one officer put it, "some of the men were living in an age of romance, and many of them had Italian girl friends, who used to mend and wash their clothes." In fact, as another officer remarked, they were living in a "land of dreams"!

Towards the end of September, it started raining, and various suggestions were put forward by the Town Major and Sub Area Commander to accommodate the battalion in more permanent quarters. However, this was not necessary, for early in October, a warning order was received for the battalion to return to Italy. The officers of the training team left about that time, and at the end of November, the battalion left Sicily to join the 10th Indian Division.

Very unfortunately, Lt.-Colonel C.A.S. Melville had to go into hospital at that time and he was unable to accompany the battalion, as he was seriously ill. It was a great blow to the battalion, as he was universally liked, and, although he had only been in command for about seven months, he had done a tremendous amount for the battalion. He had a quiet, firm manner and was respected by officers and men, and his kindness endeared him to all ranks. The officiating command of the battalion now

devolved on Major Ram Singh, D.S.O., the second-in-command, until it was decided who was to be the permanent commanding officer.

The battalion entrained at Syracuse, and the train was taken across the narrow stretch of sea by ferry, and thence to Naples. Here, the battalion bivouacked for a few nights. It rained heavily the night of arrival and it was bitterly cold, and the men and their bedding were soaked. However, this did not damp the spirits of the men, who were all delighted to know that they were about to join a fighting formation.

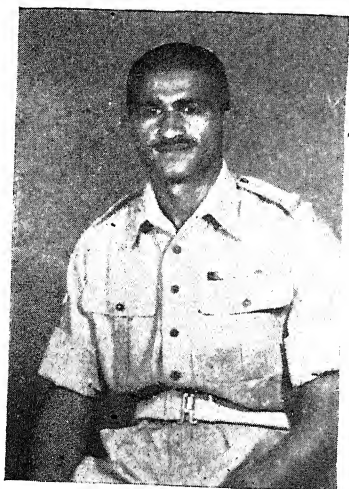
At Naples, the battalion was equipped to full scale, and then went by rail to Brindisi on its way to the Front, joining the 10th Indian Infantry Brigade in the 10th Indian Division on December 10th, 1944.

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Officers and Indian Other ranks of the Jodhpur Sardar
Infantry who were mentioned in dispatches for
gallant and distinguished conduct in Italy.



Nk. Khet Singh



L. Nk. Mod Singh



Nk. Narana Ram

PART IV.

With the 10th Indian Infantry Brigade in Italy, the conclusion of the war in Europe, the return of the battalion to Jodhpur, and its departure for further adventures.

ON December 1st, 1944, the battalion arrived at Forli, a small town on the Adriatic coastal plain, and joined the 10th Indian Division. The battalion was accommodated in a camp on the outskirts of the town and commenced a period of intensive training under the direction of the G.O.C. and with the aid of a Training team from the 4/10th Baluch Regiment.

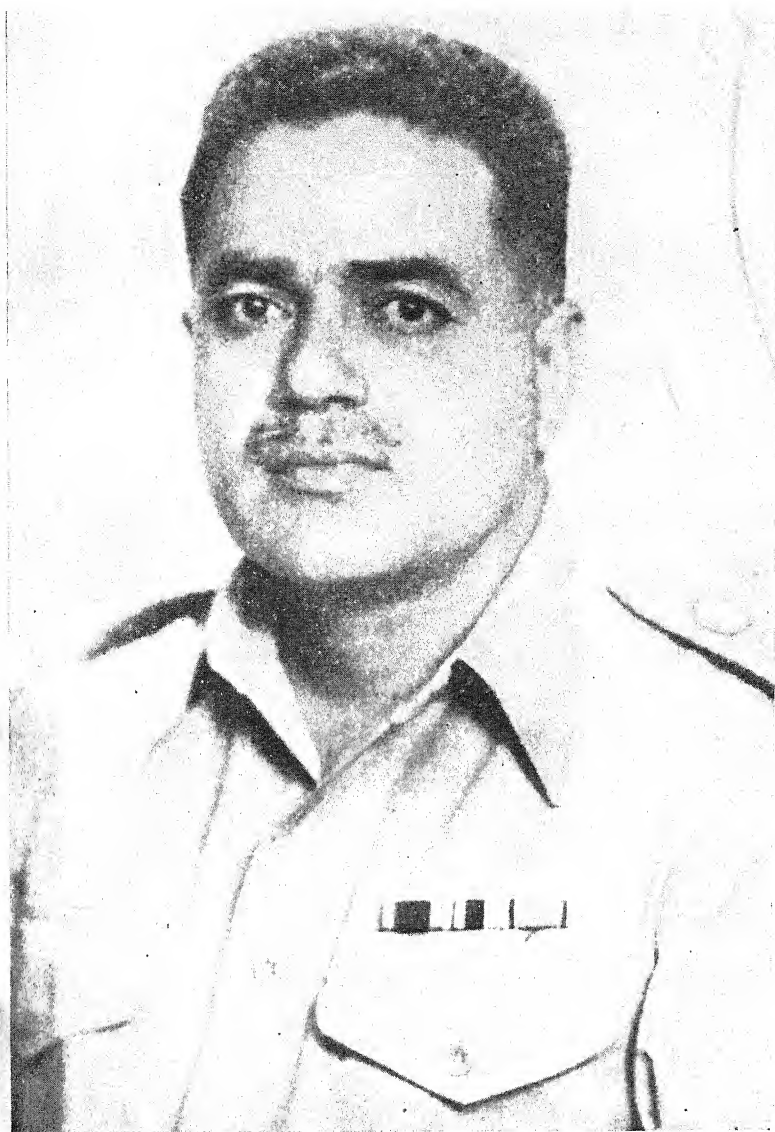
On December 10th and 11th, 1944, His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur of Jodhpur accompanied by Lt.-Colonel Maharajadhiraj Sir Ajit Singh and Captain Thakur Hari Singh visited the battalion and stayed the night at the officers' Mess. His Highness had flown out from India to see the battalion as well as other State troops and No. 54 (Jodhpur) General Purposes Transport Company, R.I.A.S.C. He had some difficulty about his visit to the battalion as the Corps Commander at first did not think it wise to allow him to go so far forward. However, this did not suit His Highness at all and he insisted on going forward, pointing out that he had travelled far with the main object of visiting his Jodhpur Sardar Infantry. Eventually, after much persuasion, he was allowed to go up to Divisional Headquarters, and there he got permission to see the battalion. His visit was tremendously appreciated by all ranks, who were overjoyed to see their Ruler amongst them in the battle area.

On December 20th, "A" and "B" companies proceeded to join the 10th Indian Infantry Brigade in the line for attachment to units, and on December 24th, "C" and "D" companies were similarly attached to units of the 20th Indian Infantry Brigade. During the whole of the month there was considerable rainfall and the cold increased until in the last week of December, there was a heavy snowfall. In spite of the severe winter conditions, the health of the troops continued to be excellent.

"C" and "D" companies joined the battalion on January 4th, 1945, and "A" and "B" companies on January 7th, from which date the battalion came under command of the 10th Indian Infantry Brigade. A further training team was allotted to the battalion and training, chiefly in patrolling, continued until January 22nd.

On January 9th, T/Major L.M. Duncan (Devonshire Regiment), attached Mahratta Light Infantry, joined the battalion, and on January 20th, T/Captain J.T.H. Macaulay (2nd Bn. London Scottish), attached 17th Dogra Regiment, and Lieut. P.W. Stoolman, 4th Bombay Grenadiers. On January 28th, T/Major G.A.C. Maunsell, 14th Punjab Regiment (for appointment as 2nd-in-command) arrived. These officers were posted to the battalion under the officering scheme, in exchange for equivalent ranks from amongst State officers.

At this period, the 10th Indian Division formed part of the 8th Army's line from the Adriatic Coast to the hills North of Florence, the Divisional sector being along the line of the



Lieut.-Colonel Ram Singh, D. S. O., Second-in-Command,
Jodhpur Sardar Infantry and, later, Commandant, 2nd Jodhpur Infantry.

Lieut.-Colonel Ram Singh was in charge of the companies of the
Jodhpur Sardar Infantry during the landing at Salerno,
Italy, and was the first of the battalion to land
on the main land of Italy.

Senio river North and North-West of Faenza, with the New Zealand Division on its right and the Carpathian Division of the Polish Corps on its left. The division was perhaps luckier than those on its right, in that the country had lifted from the flat coastal plain and was formed of small rolling foot hills sloping down to the river, the flood banks of which formed nothing like the formidable obstacle that they did further East. Thus, though maintenance in the hills involved the use of mules and jeep trucks, conditions were nothing like so water logged and over looked from flood banks as they were on the flats.

On January 24th, the battalion, less "B" Echelon and L.O.B. personnel, moved forward along Route 9 and through a much battered Faenza to its eagerly awaited and much discussed first role in the line as an infantry battalion. On arrival, the battalion was sited in the rear area of the 10th Indian Infantry brigade (the left forward brigade) and given a counter attack role. Battalion headquarters was at a farmhouse known as Al Matello and companies were centred on various other farms in the vicinity. Positions of sorts already existed round these farms, which served as billets for those not required to man the positions.

At this time, the whole countryside was under deep snow, three to four feet on the average, with deep drifts in the valleys. Night posts were severe and often continued until late in the day, though on many days the sun shone brightly. The country lanes and foot paths, which by this time were deeply rutted by heavy M.T. and mule traffic, rarely had time to thaw out;

a circumstance which eased the maintenance problem, though the surface of all tracks invariably consisted of several inches of mud and slush. Fortunately for the troops (and for the many civilians who still occupied farms in the reserve areas), fallen trees were plentiful and many and varied patterns of ammunition box stoves were to be seen in the billets, most of which possessed only one room with a fire place.

On January 29th and 30th, the battalion relieved the left forward battalion of the brigade. The area was a deep one with little frontage, with a result that the companies were echeloned behind each other, with only one company actually on the river. Bn. HQ. was established in the (chiefly roofless) remains of a cottage, known as Casa Maletto. The outstanding feature of this house was the presence of grand piano in excellent condition in the kitchen. This piano was said to have been evacuated from Faenza for safe custody. Wherever it came from, it did its duty, as the Gunner officer (a good pianist) passed many an hour in that kitchen. Company and platoon positions in this area again were centred on buildings, many of them badly battered but serving as shelter from the weather. As a great deal of the area was a forward slope, positions were chiefly manned at night, being held by small sentry groups by day whilst the rest of the garrisons slept indoors out of view. Communications were by line and R/T. Two 6-pdr. A/Tk Guns were in position with the foremost company but were never used.

The battalion remained in the line till the night of February 7/8th. During this period, in addition to the normal contact patrols to units

on the flanks, a number of patrols, both reconnaissance and ambush, were sent across the Senio river, by means of a rubber boat. Some information and a great deal of useful experience was gained but the severe weather conditions made effective patrolling very difficult.

Shelling during this period was light and, to a very great extent, the unofficial policy of both sides was "live and let live". One prisoner taken by a patrol, a German-Polish sergeant from a flash-spotting unit.

On the night of February 7/8th, the battalion was relieved by a Polish battalion, as part of the relief of the whole Division, which concentrated in the Forlimpopoli Area prior to moving to the 10th Corps area North of Florence.

On February 11th, the battalion moved by M.T. as part of the 10th Brigade Group, along a muddy mountainous road, to a staging area at Borgo San Lorenzo, near Florence. Here the battalion was accommodated in a large rectory attached to a village church. On February 12th, an early start was made for the final stage over the Atozzo Pass and up the narrow Firenzuola valley to the village of Sassaleone on the edge of the Sillaro Valley. All praise must be given to the M.T. drivers and in particular to the troop carrying vehicle drivers for this drive over a narrow winding road, up and down steep gradients and through heavy fog. The battalion finally debussed at the hamlet of Cuviola and marched up the jeep track to relieve a battalion of the East Surrey Regiment, part of the 78th Division, in the reserve area of the

right forward brigade. At this time "C" company had been left with "B" echelon at Borgo San Lorenzo, owing to the difficulty of putting four companies into three company positions (British battalions at the time only had three rifle companies).

The 10th Indian Division was now established astride the Sillaro Valley, in the hills about 10 kilometres from, and facing that portion of Route 9 which lies between Imola and Bologna. All three brigades were in the line and it was fortunate for the troops that there were four battalions per brigade, thus allowing one battalion at a time to be out in rest.

Bn. H.Q. was established at La Strada farm, as a high ridge looking across 5000 yards of broken valley to the Ortica ridge was held by the Germans. Companies were established in neighbouring farms and cottages. On February 21st, "B" Company was placed under command of the 1st Bn. Durham Light Infantry, one of the forward battalions, to provide a reserve company, and on February 27th, the battalion relieved the 1st Bn. Durham Light Infantry as left forward battalion in the line, on the Spaduro ridge position.

The country in this area is a complicated tangle of ridges and valleys, with few roads or tracks. Snow was still lying deep on the ground when the battalion arrived and the tracks were all deep in mud and slush, though the sun shone brightly every day. Towards the end of the month a thaw set in and the resulting mud made cross country movement practically impossible and added tremendously to the



An Observation Post, Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, in Italy, March 1945.

labours of the mule companies and maintenance parties.

Daily maintenance, off the main road, was by jeeps along sapper built log tracks to "jeep heads" in the rear of the battalion areas and thence by pack mule. These jeep tracks climbed the hills at the most unbelievable angles, and driving up (and down) there by night was an experience not easily forgotten.

The battalion remained in the Spaduro position till March 22nd, when it was relieved by the 2/4th Gurkha Rifles. Enemy shelling during the period varied in weight but soon became an every day experience for forward companies, whose battle positions were very exposed, being on the forward slopes of the ridge. These positions were fully manned by night but only held lightly by day, when the majority of troops were withdrawn to shelters and dugouts on the reverse slopes. The strain on the troops was heavy as the numbers required to hold the position and to provide patrols meant "all hands on deck" every night. A considerable amount of patrolling was done by all companies. Notable among these were an ambush patrol by "A" company on the night of March 3/4th, which took 2 prisoners from an opposing patrol, and a long range patrol of two N.C.Os. from "B" company (No. 1768 Naik Purkha Ram and No. 2275 L/Naik Uma Ram) which penetrated the enemy lines on March 12th, and lay up in the hills for the day, returning successfully on the night of March 13/14th, with a quantity of useful information.

German patrolling in the sector was very active but was dealt with by the watchfulness

of the defence and the constant movement of our own patrols.

The following letter was received on March 4th, from Headquarters, 10th Indian Infantry Brigade:—

“MESSAGE”

The Brigade Commander directs me to convey to you all the Divisional Commander's and his own appreciation and congratulations for the way you are dealing with enemy patrols. That is, keeping quiet and allowing him to be trapped, with the result of a good bag of prisoners of war. Please stress on all not to be loose on the trigger and keep as they are now doing. I have got no words in my vocabulary to express my appreciation or congratulations but simply dare to say how proud I am of you all.

Total battle casualties up to date were:—

	<i>Indian Officers.</i>	<i>Indian Other Ranks.</i>
Killed	9
Wounded ...	4	59

On March 22nd, the battalion moved out of the line to the small town of Castel Del Rio, in the narrow Firenzuola Valley. Here Captain Pehap Singh was already established as Town Major. The battalion was accommodated partly in the Castla (lately the town hall) and partly in houses and tents. The troops quickly settled down to making the most of their rest period. A cinema with Indian films was available and

well attended. Hot baths and a change of clothing were produced by the Divisional Bath unit. On two occasions, the Pipe Band, now only five pipers and three drummers strong, played Retreat in the square.

On March 27th, Lt.-Colonel Ram Singh, D.S.O., left the battalion, for India, having handed over command to Major G.A.C. Maunsell (2nd-in-Command). Prior to his departure, Lt.-Colonel Ram Singh, D.S.O., was dined out in the officers' Mess and also by his old company ("C" company). On the 27th morning the battalion lined the road and Lt.-Colonel Ram Singh, D.S.O., left by jeep, headed by the pipe band which played him out to the edge of the town.

On April 2nd, the battalion relieved the 1st Bn. Durham Light Infantry in the La Strada (reserve) position and from the night of April 3/4th became responsible for the patrolling on the right and left battalion sectors of the brigade front, with one company of each 2/4th Gurkha Rifles and the 4/10th Baluch Regiment under command. The centre battalion sector continued to be patrolled by the 1st Bn. Highland Light Infantry who had recently come into the brigade. This arrangement was to cover up the fact that the 10th brigade had been relieved by Italian troops as part of the relief of the 10th Indian Division which was being concentrated for the forthcoming mobile operations on the coastal plain. As a consequence of continued information of rearward movement behind the German lines, it became increasingly important to discover whether the enemy were holding their line in strength or not and it was

therefore decided to probe their position in strength with a view to subsequent exploitation if successful.

“A” Company (temporarily commanded by Major L.M. Duncan) was detailed to carry out a platoon raid on Pt. 362, part of the Ortica feature opposite the Spaduro ridge on the night of April 5/6th. This raid was timed to coincide with a similar raid on the left, by the Nabha Akal infantry who were covering the original 20th brigade front. The following report describes this raid:—

“REPORT”.

Platoon Raid Pt. 362, night of April 5/6th, 1945.

1. Plan was to establish a firm base with one platoon in Pt. 323-Pond-Pt. 307, and put in another platoon raid on Pt. 362 exploiting the Casa Ortica with third platoon if successful.
2. Phase one went according to plan and Havildar Hanuman Singh occupied all three features with No. 1 platoon of “A” Company. Communication failed and a runner came back to company commander with success report. This phase began at 2200 hours and was finally reported successful at 0045 hours. Delay being caused merely by time taken to report. This part of the operation was handled with quiet efficiency by Havildar Hanuman Singh in his first time as platoon commander after some months as company quartermaster havildar.

3. Phase two began at 0140 hours under Jemadar Parbhu Singh in command of No. 2 platoon. This platoon crossed the forward line of No. 1 platoon's base at 0230 hours as ordered. After this, nothing was heard for some hours owing to the extreme care with which the platoon was brought into the area of objective Pt. 362. Two sections were on the objective within 20-30 yards of an enemy position, before they were discovered. Part of the credit for this success must go to L/Naik Aidan Singh of No. 1 platoon who commanded a two men reconnaissance earlier and discovered enemy occupied positions on Ortica feature left of the objective. This caused Jemadar Parbhu Singh to change his route in order to avoid being badly flanked by strong enemy positions.

The following information was gained by No. 2 platoon after they were discovered to be on Pt. 362:—

- (a) Enemy listening post just behind centre hillock on Pt. 362.
- (b) Multiple barreled mortar in position behind Barney's knoll at 035282, this mortar fired into nullah at 038276.
- (c) Strong enemy occupied spandau positions on ridge South East of Casa Ortica.
- (d) Enemy 2" mortar in area Casa Ortica which fired on nullah 200 yards West of Casa Maleto (Pt. 323).

- (e) Enemy spandau positions on reverse slope of Barney's knoll firing across Pt. 362 feature towards Pond 024274 crossing fire in that area with Ortica Spandaus.

The platoon withdrew according to plan and concentrated in area Casa Maleto (Pt. 323) under cover of 2" mortar and L.M.G. Fire.

The following men deserve mention as follows:—

- (i) L/Naik Kishan Singh, who occupied one open position under spandau fire in front of pond and fired 40 rounds 2" mortar H.E. on to positions on Pt. 362 and Ortica which were observed from the company O.P. and were very accurate.
- (ii) Sepoys Kushal Singh, Ishwar Singh, Guman Singh, and Hamir Singh, all L.M.G. numbers, who covered the withdrawal and fought a L.M.G. duel with enemy spandaus. The last three above named were all wounded and the first stayed behind in Casa Maleto to fire off his remaining magazines. This man was reported missing but was subsequently recovered from Casa Maleto unhurt later on during the morning of April 6th.

The entire company withdrew without further casualties behind Spaduro feature Pt. 396 under cover of D.F. fire Arty. in Spt.

Jemadar Parbhu Singh is strongly recommended for special mention for the way in which he retained the control of his platoon under most difficult conditions and inspired his men to remain calm and orderly in withdrawal through some particularly effective enemy D.F. and fixed line fire.

The undermentioned are worthy of note:—

- (i) Naik Mehtab Singh for leading without being seen into a position behind the objective within 25 yards of enemy.
- (ii) Sepoy Ram Singh and Sepoy Nathu Singh for volunteering to maintain supplies of L.M.G and 2" mortar ammunition at a most critical time under heavy fire.

Jemadar Parbhu Singh afterwards received the M.C. for his leadership on this occasion.

On April 6th, orders were received placing the battalion under command of the 25th Indian Infantry brigade from April 8th. The move was carried out on April 8th and 9th, and by midnight of April 9th, the battalion found itself occupying the Monte Calderaro position, a large spot projecting northwards from Monte Grande, a high point on the North bank of Sillaro River, this position was the high tide mark of the autumn advance by the Fifth Army, having originally being captured, together with Monte Grande, by U.S. Troops who walked on to it, quite unopposed. It subsequently saw much bitter fighting during the winter, evidence of which, in the form of shattered houses, surrounded

by unmentionable debris and refuse, "dead" tanks and dead mules, was plentiful.

The area held was in the form of a triangle, showing a convex slope on all sides and connected by its apex to the main Monte Grande feature. The enemy held positions which covered the three sides, including the precariously maintained ground along which all traffic had to pass.

The four rifle companies, augmented by all possible spare men, were centred, on the only groups of buildings whose cellars had survived sufficiently to provide shelters by day to the garrisons. The right forward company held the hamlet of Vezello, with a strong enemy post at "Loope House" hardly 200 yards away and with battle positions 70 yards of the enemy's. The left forward company held Rovine, a small group of houses on a bluff, looking across 500 yards of open valley to the enemy positions on the Castellaro feature. In the centre, and with a platoon facing each side of the triangle, was the La Costa company and along the road towards the company at IL Dogana. Bn. H.Q., for reasons of communication, was established some way back, on the slopes of Monte Grande. A country lane ran through the position through—Bn. H.Q.,—IL Dogana La Costa—Vezello, but La Costa—Rovine—Vezello were only connected by a footpath. All these paths were under enemy observation and fire by day and under continual harassing fire by night, through which the daily maintenance mules carrying food, water, and ammunition, had to move.

A large number of casualties were caused not only by the night harassing but by the day light

harassing of buildings, frequently in quite heavy concentrations. Movement at night was unhealthy though necessary, and forbidden by day.

The out going C.O., on leaving, had said that no patrolling had been done for a long time by units in the sector, owing to the difficulty of the terrain. However, the first night made it quite obvious that the German paratroops opposite were not of the same opinion and, thereafter, the battalion settled down to a nightly programme of reconnaissance and fighting patrols. A considerable amount of useful information was gained and the morale of the battalion, never low, was very much heightened when it became obvious that the enemy patrols were not only being kept at arms length but were fewer and further between.

Fighting patrols were taken out by both officers and Indian officers and there were a number of clashes, both with enemy patrols and with enemy in battle positions.

Conspicuous amongst these patrols is a reconnaissance patrol of three men from "B" company, which, though a failure, is a remarkable example of courage and fortitude. No. 2257 Naik Jaisha Ram and two sepoy No. 2177 Lalla Ram and No. 3026 Bhaga Ram set out on the evening of April 12th from Rovine, under cover of a smoke screen to reconnoitre a portion of Castellaro feature. Unfortunately, the patrol moved faster than they realised and came into enemy view through the forward edge of the smoke. Heavy spandau and mortar fire wounded all these men. No. 2257 Naik

Jaisha Ram ordered his men to withdraw and carried one of them himself for some distance. Becoming exhausted by his wounds, he then made the man carry on and himself took up a covering position. He eventually crawled back to Rovine late at night and was at once evacuated to hospital but later died of his wounds.

Towards the end of the battalion's stay on Monte Calderaro, a neighbouring C.O. remarked that the battalion had achieved a remarkable name for itself amongst the other units, on account of the forcefulness of its patrolling.

On April 15th, the battalion, together with other units in the sector, came under command of H.Q., No. 6, A.G.R.A., known as MACFORCE. On the following day No. 6 A.G.R.A. was relieved by Headquarters, Jewish Brigade. This assorted force of Corps troops units now became the hinge between the Eighth Army on the right and the Fifth Army on the left and when the long awaited final push began, anxiety as to the continued presence or otherwise, of the enemy became acute.

On the morning of April 17th, the Lovat Scouts, who were occupying Monte Grande got unopposed day light patrols into places which had been enemy occupied the night before. "A" Company at Vezollo, were immediately ordered to patrol to and occupy, if possible, "Tank" and "Loope House". These thorns in the flesh were found unoccupied but heavily booby trapped and mined. The area was made good by 1500 hours and "C" company was moved up to Vezollo, being replaced at IL Dogano by "A" company, 1st Bn. Highland Light Infantry later in the evening.

The question of the Castellaro feature on the left flank now became urgent, no further advance northwards being possible whilst the enemy occupied it. H.Q., MACFORCE, asked for the area to be probed in strength and it was decided to send a strong fighting patrol under cover of a smoke screen to the high point of this feature, with another platoon ready to follow up on the right (at CA DI CO), if Castellaro proved vacant. "D" Company was detailed to carry out this operation from Rovine. After considerable delay due to the variable wind affecting the smoke screen arrangements, No. 12 platoon (Jemadar Bega Ram) set out at approximately 1830 hours. This platoon reached the top of Castellaro unopposed and the second platoon (No. 10 platoon, Jemadar Teja Ram) was immediately dispatched towards its objective. No. 12 platoon was busy reorganising and No. 10 platoon barely down into the valley on its way to CA DI CO, when a heavy enemy counter attack (later estimated at approximately two platoons) swept No. 12 platoon off Castellaro after some bitter hand to hand fighting and at the same time heavy mortar and spandau fire pinned No. 12 platoon to the ground. It being obvious that this part of the enemy position was still occupied in strength. An immediate withdrawal was ordered and the two platoons withdrew under cover of smoke and an H.Q. concentration by all available artillery. The total casualties from this affair were two killed two missing and seventeen wounded. In the morning, one man was afterwards found dead and the body recovered and the other was believed to have been wounded and removed by the enemy.

On the morning of April 18th, a heavy smoke screen was laid in front of the Castellaro feature, followed shortly by a heavy artillery concentration on the enemy position. From the subsequent activities of the German Red Cross parties, it is thought that a large number of casualties were caused to the enemy, who in return, shelled Monte Calderaro, but with little result. During the afternoon, a patrol from "C" company at Vezollo penetrated to IL Poggio, a small hamlet to the north, without being opposed, but reported the area to be heavily mined. In the evening, Major Dungan Singh, M.C., was wounded by a mortar splinter whilst examining the forward area from an O.P.

On the night of April 19/20th, the battalion was relieved by the 1st Bn. Highland Light Infantry and moved to a rest area near the village of San Clemente in the Sillaro valley. Here all ranks had a much needed rest, bath, and complete change of clothing. "B" Echelon (still in the Borgo San Lorenzo area) was sent for in preparation for a move forward.

On April 22nd, the battalion moved to rejoin the 10th Indian Division, travelling by M.T. through the devastated Sillaro valley, across Route 9, where it rejoined the 10th Indian Infantry Brigade. During this move, "B" Echelon was misdirected and at night-fall found itself on the edge of the battle in the New Zealand area. It eventually rejoined the battalion early next morning in time to provide a meal before the next move.

All ranks of the battalion were very disappointed when they discovered that the brigade

had just come out of the line, having been in the van of the division since the crossing of the Senio river. On the afternoon of April 23rd, the brigade moved to an area somewhat nearer the battle zone.

Billets were allotted to the battalion in the small town of Baricella. The troops of the brigade were the first Allied troops to enter this area, which had been by-passed in the fighting, and they found a welcome awaiting them, the town being decorated with the few flags available and the streets lined with cheering groups of civilians. The town had only been evacuated 36 hours previously by the Germans.

During the ensuing week, training in conjunction with the 8th Royal tank Regiment (Churchill tanks) was begun. In the meantime the tide of the war flowed northwards, faster and faster, and it soon became obvious that if the Division did not move soon, it would be out of the war. Hope of action was roused by a further move on April 30th to a fresh Divisional concentration area in the vicinity of Ferrara, on the south bank of the river Po. Here the battalion was billeted in farms and hay lofts on the outskirts of the village of Vigarano. On May 2nd, the announcement of the cessation of hostilities in Italy was received.

On May 6th, a warning order was received placing the battalion at short notice to move to Taranto for prisoner of war duties. This news was very disappointing as every one felt that the battalion had done quite enough prisoner of war duties during the early part of its tour overseas.

On May 8th, a parade was held to announce Victory in Europe Day and was followed by thanks giving prayers in all companies. In the evening a "Bara Khana" was held.

On May 9th, Major General D. Reid, D.S.O., M.C., General Officer Commanding, 10th Indian Division, inspected the battalion on parade and afterwards spoke to officers and Indian officers. The G.O.C. said that the battalion had gained an excellent name for itself in the Division and that he hoped that it would soon rejoin. The parade was completed by a march past in column of route.

On May 10th, the battalion left Vigarano by M.T. for railhead and thence by rail to Taranto, arriving on May 13th. The pipe band was left with the 10th brigade, to play at the Victory in Europe Day celebrations and at the march past of the brigade. The band rejoined on May 17th.

Whilst at Taranto, the battalion was accommodated in the staging area, in tents, and provided one company ("A" company) for prisoner of war escorts at a nearby prisoner of war camp.

May 18th was kept as a general holiday to celebrate Victory in Europe Day, inter company sports and a hockey tournament being held. In the evening a warning order was received that the battalion would move to M.E.F. on May 20th and 21st as prisoner of war escorts.

On May 20th, Major Dungar Singh, M.C., with "C" company and part of H.Q. company embarked with a large party of German prisoners

of war and on May 21st, the remainder of the battalion embarked with a further contingent of Germans. By May 25th, the battalion was again concentrated at "F" Camp Mina (near Cairo). Here, the battalion settled down, perforce, to wait its turn to return to India. A training programme, based chiefly on weapon handling and the training of specialists, was begun.

The battalion, led by the pipe band, took part in the King's Birthday parade in Cairo on June 14th, 1945, and the pipe band and bugles represented the battalion at an entertainment at the EI Alamein Club where a selection of items by Indian troops was presented. It also played at an "At Home" given by the Indo-Egyptian Cultural Relations Society at Cairo and the performance was very much appreciated.

On July 19th, the battalion left camp and it embarked for India on July 20th, in H.M.T. "Orduna", in company with the Sawai Man Guards of the Jaipur State Forces.

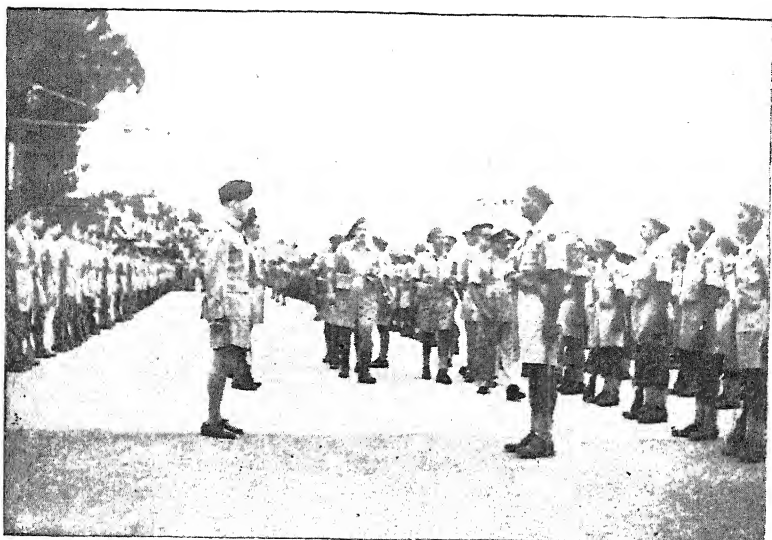
The voyage was peaceful and without incident. On July 24th an "At Home" was given on board to all officers and V.C.Os on the auspicious occasion of His Highness' birthday.

The battalion arrived in Bombay on the afternoon of July 29th, and disembarked on the morning of July 31st, 1945. The orders received there were to the effect that the battalion would proceed to Jodhpur in two bits, the Main Body consisting of 12 State officers, 20 Indian officers, and 665 Indian other ranks would entrain that evening, the remainder of the

battalion consisting of 4 State officers, 6 Indian officers, and 327 Indian other ranks would go to Kalyan transit camp and would travel to Jodhpur later. This was a great disappointment, as everyone wanted the whole battalion to arrive together. The C.O. asked if this could not be arranged, but the authorities at Bombay were adamant. Accordingly, the Main Body of the battalion under Lt.-Colonel G.A.C. Maunsell reached Ahmedabad on the morning of August 1st, and changed on to the metre gauge line.

The train arrived at Jodhpur at 1020 hours on August 2nd, 1945, and the battalion had a rousing reception. The station was specially decorated for the occasion, and His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur, Shri Bada Maharaj Kumar, Lt.-Colonel G.V.B. Williams, C.I.E., M.C., Political Agent, Western Rajputana States, Lt.-Colonel Sir Donald Field, C.I.E., Chief Minister, Brigadier R. C. Duncan, M. V. O., O. B. E., Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, all the State Ministers, all officers of the Jodhpur State Forces, and all the senior civil officers were present on the platform. A strong detachment of the R.A.F. was posted to do honour to the returning battalion.

After the battalion had detrained, His Highness shook hands with all the officers, and then he, accompanied by Brigadier R.C. Duncan, walked down the line of the whole battalion. Later, he took the salute from an armoured carrier outside the station as the battalion marched past him with the Bn. pipe band in front. The whole route from the station to the camp, a distance of about 3 miles, was lined by troops of the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre,



His Highness, inspecting the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry at Jodhpur Railway Station. A Guard of Honour from the Royal Air Force is on the left.



His Highness, with Major General Duncan beside him, taking the salute of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry as the battalion marches past him on the way to Camp.

Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre, and 3rd Jodhpur Infantry.

A special camp, with electric light and all facilities, had been prepared for the battalion, and, on its arrival, it was entertained to a meal by the Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre, and the following day by the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre.

On August 5th, the remainder of the battalion ("D" company and a part of H.Q. company under Major Magni Ram) arrived at Jodhpur. The train was brought up close to the camp and a detachment from all units was posted along the road to the camp, while Brigadier R.C. Duncan and all officers were present to welcome them.

A few days later, all the men of the battalion dispersed to their homes on some well deserved leave.

After an absence of over four years, the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry had returned home covered with honour. It had seen many countries—Eritrea, Egypt, Syria, Algeria, Tunisia, Sicily, and Italy. It had fought along side British, Canadian, American, Polish, and Italian troops. Wherever it had been, the officers and men had made friends and were liked, and respected. It had seen the beautiful cities of Rome, Florence, and Naples, and enjoyed the lovely countryside of Italy, Sicily, and Algeria. It had experienced the bitter cold of Italy in the winter and the intense heat of Massawa in the summer. And during that long period of absence it had gained a splendid

name for itself and worthily upheld the great military traditions of Jodhpur State.

It could now await with quiet confidence the next adventure, which fate should bring.

Since leaving India and until the return on August 2nd, 1945, the battalion suffered in casualties:—

	<i>State Officers</i>	<i>Indian Officers.</i>	<i>Indian Other Ranks.</i>
Killed or died of .			
wounds	12
Wounded	1	4	79
Died of disease	16

While all ranks of the battalion were enjoying their well earned war leave, information was received at Headquarters that the battalion had been selected to join the 150th Infantry Brigade in the South of India, and would move about 10 days after it had collected on return from leave.

His Highness, accompanied by Major General R.C. Duncan, inspected the battalion and the Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre on parade on October 13th, 1945, and later presented "Mention in Dispatches" certificates to all those who had been awarded them for their distinguished service in Italy.

The whole battalion was entertained by His Highness to a meal at Chhittar Palace on two nights—half the battalion coming each night. On their arrival, His Highness shook hands with every single man in the battalion, and, later,



The Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, on return from overseas, marching through Jodhpur on its way to Camp.

he and Major General Duncan walked among them and chatted to the men.

The Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, under the command of Lt.-Colonel G.A.C. Maunsell, left Jodhpur by special train on the night of October 15th, 1945, and was seen off by Major General R.C. Duncan and a large number of people. After a 5 days train journey, it detrained at Bowringpet, near Bangalore, and joined the 150th Infantry Brigade. Training was taken in hand almost at once, and a large part of the battalion proceeded to Cuddalore for jungle warfare training.

The names of the following officers and Indian Other Ranks of the battalion appeared in a London Gazette published in November, 1945, as having been mentioned in dispatches for gallant and distinguished conduct in Italy:—

Major (now Lt.-Colonel) Ram Singh, D.S.O.
Captain Ramcharan Singh.
Havildar Madan Singh.
Naik Purkha Ram.

On December 2nd, 1945, the battalion with the 150th Infantry Brigade left Bowringpet for overseas. It embarked at Madras, and sailed via Singapore, for Hongkong, China.

Citations for the awards to Officers and Indian Other Ranks of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry for gallantry during the fighting in Italy while serving with the 10th Indian Division from December 1944—May 1945.

Jemadar Parbhu Singh. **Military Cross.**
(immediate award.)

On the night of April 5/6th, 1945, Jemadar Parbhu Singh was in command of No. 2 Platoon, "A" Company, detailed to raid the enemy position on Pt. 362. In accordance with the orders, he led his platoon through the forward base established by No.1 Platoon towards the enemy position, across ground previously unreconnoitred by him. Owing to the skill with which Jemadar Parbhu Singh led his platoon, it arrived to within 25-30 yards of the enemy position before it was discovered. Owing to the difficult nature of the ground, the advance of the platoon had been considerably delayed, nevertheless, in full knowledge of the fact that the approach of daylight would make his withdrawal extremely difficult, this V.C.O. continued the advance until the platoon was discovered. During the ensuing fight, he maintained excellent control under extremely heavy fire, both from the flanks and front. When it became obvious that the position was strongly held by the enemy, he, in accordance with the orders, withdrew his platoon, taking with him three casualties, through heavy fire from Artillery, mortars, and automatic weapons.

The successful conclusion of this raid, designed to test the enemy strength, was due to a great

measure to the coolness, courage, and leadership of this V.C.O.

No. 4660/2257

Naik Jaisha Ram .. Mention in Dispatches.
(Immediate award).

On April 12th, 1945, the above named N.C.O. together with two other sepoys, was ordered to attack an enemy spandau post on Monte Castellaro in broad day light. With these two sepoys, he set out for the enemy post and in the early stages every thing seemed to be going alright. But, when this patrol was within 80 yards of the enemy post, they were very heavily fired on by the enemy from all directions, and all three were badly wounded. Realising the situation and that all three were lying wounded within 80 yards of the enemy post, he, although severely wounded, charged the enemy post singlehanded, but was again wounded in the stomach when he was about 50 yards from the post. He continued firing on the enemy from where he lay. It was then becoming dark, so that he was able to crawl back to the other two men. He then withdrew his patrol, but due to loss of blood and exhaustion, he could go no further and lay down. He ordered the two sepoys to withdraw independently and leave him while he covered their withdrawal by fire. Later, he crawled back to Bn. H.Q. arriving completely exhausted by loss of blood. He, however, insisted on giving information regarding the enemy before he was sent to hospital. He died from wounds in hospital the next day.

This N.C.O. had previously been wounded while on patrol near Monte Spaduro on the night of March 15/16th, 1945.

No. 4223/1837

Naik Lakha Ram.. Mention in Dispatches.
(Immediate award).

On April 17th, 1945, at about 1600 hours No. 12 Platoon, "D" Company, commanded by Jemadar Bega Ram, was ordered to occupy the high Pt. Monte Castellaro feature. Under cover of smoke from 2" Mortar, No. 12 Platoon occupied this feature, whereupon immediately a counterattack came in, and the reserve Section was called upon. No. 4223/1837 Naik Lakha Ram, under heavy mortar and spandau fire, took his section up to the crest and there met heavy enemy opposition. Nevertheless he kept his section well under control. No. 1 Bren was wounded, so he detailed another man, and as he had no grenades left, he took some grenades from the wounded man's pocket and straight away killed two and wounded four more of the enemy, consequently preventing the enemy from staging a heavy counterattack on the platoon.

CHAPTER IV.

The 2nd Jodhpur Infantry.

AT the beginning of June 1940, the British Empire stood in the gravest peril. The British army on the continent of Europe, after the epic of Dunkirk, had withdrawn to England, leaving behind nearly all its equipment and much of its armament. France and Belgium had surrendered to the Germans. The British Empire stood alone, and in deadly peril, to face the full might of Germany, and her satellite, Italy, and to preserve freedom. Most of the world at that time was convinced that Britain was staring defeat in the face, and that it was only a matter of a few days or months before defeat came, and Germany was supreme. Those were dark days indeed, not only for the people of the British Empire but for most of the world, and it required a brave heart to face the future without fear. But Britain was undismayed.

Shortly before the surrender of France and Belgium, Mr. Winston Churchill had been appointed Prime Minister of Great Britain in place of Mr. Neville Chamberlain. This was an event of outstanding importance at that critical time, for he proved himself not only then, but all through those long, weary years of war, to be one of the greatest leaders of all time, if not the greatest. His courage, drive, and personality was an invaluable asset at that time. The people of the British Commonwealth of Nations stood firm under his magnificent leadership.

I feel that it will not be out of place to quote in this history some extracts from the inspiring

speeches of Mr. Winston Churchill, which did so much to spur the people on to greater efforts, to allay fear, and to instil courage at a time when many people of the British Commonwealth might have felt that all was lost.

May 14th, 1940.

"I have nothing to offer but Blood, Toil, Tears, and Sweat. We have before us an ordeal of the most grievous kind. We have before us many many long months of struggle and suffering."

May 14th, 1940.

"To the question what is our aim. I can give the answer in one word—it is VICTORY. Victory at all costs. Victory in spite all peril. Victory however long and hard the road may be. Come then, let us go forward with our united strength."

June 4th, 1940.

"We shall fight on the seas and oceans. We shall fight with growing confidence and strength in the air. We shall fight on beaches and landing grounds, in fields, in streets, and in hills. We shall never surrender."

June 18th, 1940.

"The whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned on us. Hitler knows that he will have to break us in this island or lose the war. If we stand up to him, the life of the world may move forward into broad, sunlight

uplands. But if we fail, then the whole world, and all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new dark age made more sinister by the lights of perverted science. Therefore, let us go to our duty. Let us so bear ourselves that if the British Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say "This was their greatest hour".

"Come then, let us to the task, to the battle, and the toil. Each to our part, each to our station! Fill the armies, rule the air, pour out the munitions, strangle the U-boats, sweep the mines, plough the land, succour the wounded, uplift the downcast and honour the brave. Let us go forward together in all parts of the Empire. There is not a week nor a day nor an hour to be lost."

July 14th, 1940.

"We are fighting by ourselves alone, but we are not fighting *for* ourselves alone."

General Eisenhower, that great American and great Commander of the British and American armies in Europe, speaking at a luncheon at the Mansion House in London on June 12th, 1945, after the freedom of the City of London had been conferred on him, referred to the time "when the British Empire stood alone, but unconquered, almost naked but unafraid to defy the Hitler hordes. There arose no cry for mercy, no wail of defeat. Your faith and endurance have fully been rewarded."

In India, preparations were begun immediately for a vast expansion of the army in India.

His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur at once wrote through the Political Department to say that he wished to raise a half battalion of infantry for internal security duty in his State, so that the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry would be free for service elsewhere, and that this half battalion would be expanded to a full battalion later, if necessary.

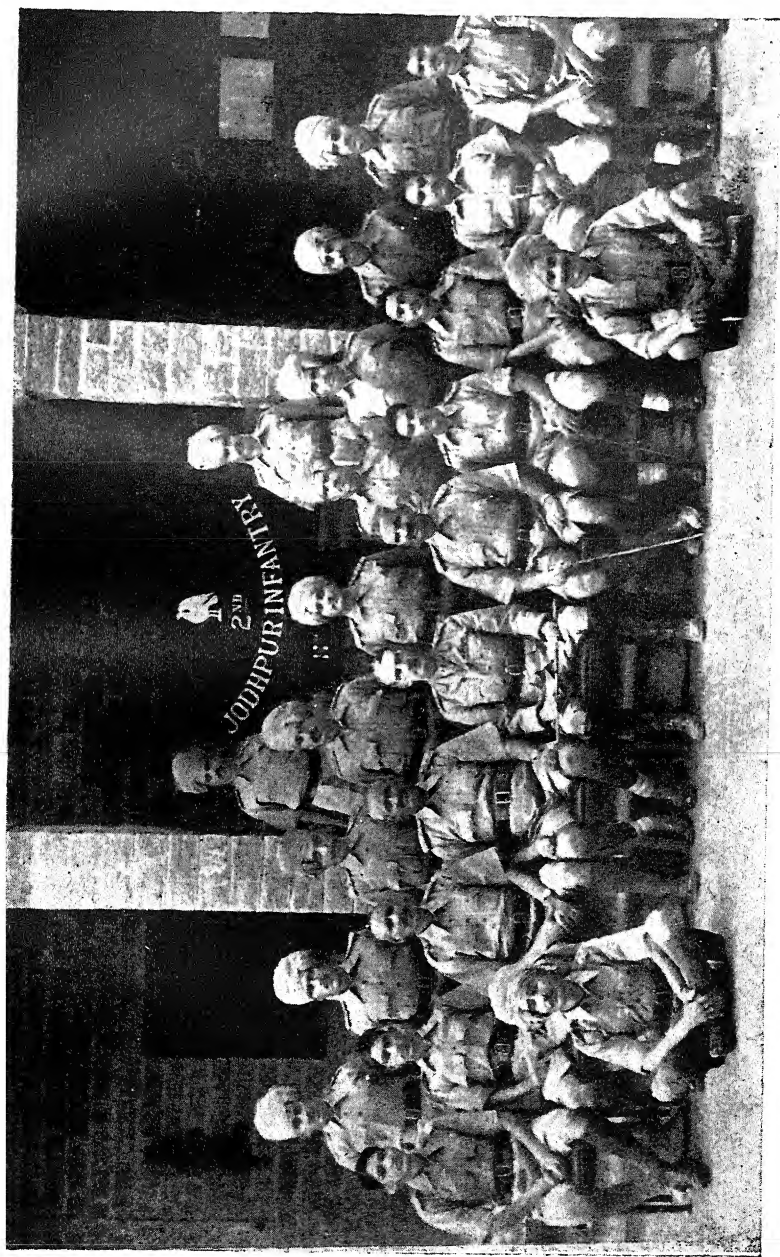
Brigadier Duncan went to G.H.Q., Simla, to try to arrange for arms and equipment for this battalion in anticipation of sanction, and he was successful in obtaining a promise that these would be supplied at an early date.

The new battalion was designated the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry, and Brigadier Duncan, under the orders of His Highness, commenced the raising of it on June 15th, 1940.

The battalion consisted of 2 companies Rajputs, 1 company Jats, and 1 company Kayamkhanies.

His Highness was pleased to appoint his brother, Maharaj Shri Ajit Singhji Sahib, as Colonel-in-Chief, and Brigadier R. C. Duncan M.V.O., O.B.E., as Honorary Colonel of the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry.

Major Heer Singh, who had been second-in-command of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, but had retired on pension some years previously, was appointed Commandant of the battalion, and a nucleus of officers was obtained from those surplus in the Sardar Infantry, and a few retired officers.



State and Indian Officers of the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry at the time of the raising
of the Battalion with Brigadier R. C. Duncan.

From the start, there was no difficulty in obtaining recruits. Men and boys poured into Jodhpur from the countryside, to enlist in the new battalion. Brigadier Duncan personally selected all recruits for it, ably assisted by Lt.-Colonel Heer Singh, and it took much time to choose those who were up to standard, from the large crowd of men and boys who swarmed round the Headquarters office every morning, all eager to enlist. And time was a valuable commodity those days, for the work in the Headquarters office had more than doubled during the past month. Captain P.R. Badve, Medical officer-in-charge of the Military Hospital was also kept very busy medically examining recruits, not only for the new battalion, but for the Jodhpur Lancers and the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry as well.

Indeed so brisk was recruiting at that time that it was realised that it would be easily possible to enlist a sufficient number of recruits for a full battalion within a short time, whereas, if the expansion was delayed, many potentially good recruits would be turned away disappointed, and they might not be forthcoming later.

Consequently, His Highness agreed to the expansion of the half battalion to a full battalion, and a promise to supply arms and equipment for a full battalion was obtained from the Government of India.

Some N.C.Os were obtained from the older men of the Sardar Infantry, whilst a number of pensioned N.C.Os were re-employed. The battalion was accommodated in a part of the

Sardar Infantry Lines, which became much congested, and also in tents.

Towards the end of September 1940, when warning orders had been received for the move of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry outside the State, the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry took over all station guards and duties. By the end of October, the battalion was up to full strength.

The provision of efficient State officers for the battalion was found to be the chief difficulty, as all officers of even moderate education and who could speak and write English were required for the Jodhpur Lancers or the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry or for the Training Centres of those units.

Lt.-Colonel Heer Singh was much handicapped in this respect in the training of the battalion, but, although he himself had practically no knowledge of English, he worked wonders. His adjutant was 2nd.-Lieut. Mohan Ram, a boy who had only recently left school, had some knowledge of English, and had been an officer cadet in the Sardar Infantry, but had little military education. His company commanders were Captain Birma Ram, who had been a Subedar in the Rajputana Rifles and had been re-employed as a state officer in the Sardar Infantry, Captain Mamdu Khan, a retired state officer of the Jodhpur Lancers, and Captain Madho Singh transferred from the Sardar Infantry. The first two officers could speak no English while Captain Madho Singh's knowledge of it was very small.

The remaining officers were Lieut. Madan Singh, late Risaldar in the Jodhpur Lancers,

and 2nd.-Lieuts. Pirthi Singh and Daulat Singh. Shortly after the raising of the battalion, three officer cadets were appointed, Malam Singh, Moti Singh, and Kishan Singh, but these were soon considered fit to attend a course at an officers' training school, whence they were posted to the Sardar Infantry.

Training was continued without interruption for the first half of 1941, but nothing of special interest happened.

In the autumn, it became known that there was a great need for more garrison battalions in British India to replace first line battalions, who would be available for field service. Consequently, His Highness offered the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry for this purpose, and stated that if this offer was accepted, he would give orders for the raising of another battalion to take its place as a State Service unit.

This offer was gratefully accepted by His Excellency the Viceroy, and on December 11th, 1941, orders were received for the move of the battalion to Allahabad, United Provinces, for internal security duty.

Lt.-Colonel S. F. Martin, 15th Punjab Regiment, was appointed to command the battalion on its arrival at Allahabad.

His Highness, accompanied by Brigadier R. C. Duncan, and Colonel Maharaj Shri Ajit Singhji Sahib, carried out a detailed inspection of the battalion before its departure, and gave an inspiring farewell address.

The 2nd Jodhpur Infantry left Jodhpur on December 29th, 1941, arriving there on December 31st, and was accommodated in Tomb's barracks.

The following officers were on the strength of the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry on its arrival at Allahabad:—

Lt. Colonel S.F. Martin	..	Officer Commanding
Captain Birma Ram.		
Captain Madho Singh.		
Captain Mamdu Khan.		
Captain Chhattar Singh.		
Captain Madan Singh.		
Lieut. Daulat Singh	..	Quarter Master.
2nd.-Lieut. Karim Khan.	..	Adjutant.
Captain D.J.H. Roche, 9th		Special Service.
Jat Regt.		Officer.

INDIAN OFFICERS.

Subedar-Major Sheodana Ram.
Subedar Jorawar Khan.
Subedar Sang Singh.
Subedar Moti Singh, I.O.M., I.D.S.M.
Subedar Deda Ram.
Jemadar Madho Singh.
Jemadar Bhopal Singh.
Jemadar Roop Singh.
Jemadar Rewat Singh.
Jemadar Kishna Ram.
Jemadar Sanwal Ram.
Jemadar Goma Ram.
Jemadar Pabudan Singh.
Jemadar Jaswant Singh.
Jemadar Jiwan Singh.



His Highness accompanied by Major General R. C. Duncan and Colonel Maharajadhiraj Sir Ajit Singh, inspecting the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry prior to the battalion leaving the State for service in British India.



His Highness accompanied by Major General R. C. Duncan and Colonel Maharajadhiraj Sir Ajit Singh, inspecting the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry prior to the battalion leaving the State for service in British India.

Jemadar Hamid Khan.
Jemadar Alim Khan.
Jemadar Abdu Khan.
Jemadar Kalyan Singh.
Jemadar Ladhu Khan.

Brigadier Magnay, the Area Commander, visited the battalion on January 13th and saw it at work, and, on January 24th, Brigadier R.C. Duncan arrived by air from Jodhpur on a four days' visit to discuss matters with Lt.-Colonel Martin and see how the battalion had settled down. He was pleased to find that the men were well housed and thoroughly happy, and liked living so close to the holy river Ganges.

A few days later, "C" Company, under the command of Captain Madan Singh, left for Benares, where it remained for five weeks on detachment, during which time, Captain Madan Singh acted as officer commanding, Benares, in addition to being station staff officer. "A" Company, under Captain Chhatter Singh, was located in the Allahabad Fort. The remainder of the battalion was employed on training, whilst small parties were sent to the Satna and Jaitwat bridges to erect wire fencing.

Towards the end of February 1942, orders were received for the move of the battalion to Yol. Prisoners of War camp, Kangra Valley, Punjab, and the battalion left Allahabad by troop special train on March 11th, and took over guard duties at No. 28 Italian Prisoners of War camp, Yol.

About this time, there were various changes amongst officers, Captains Madho Singh, Chhatter

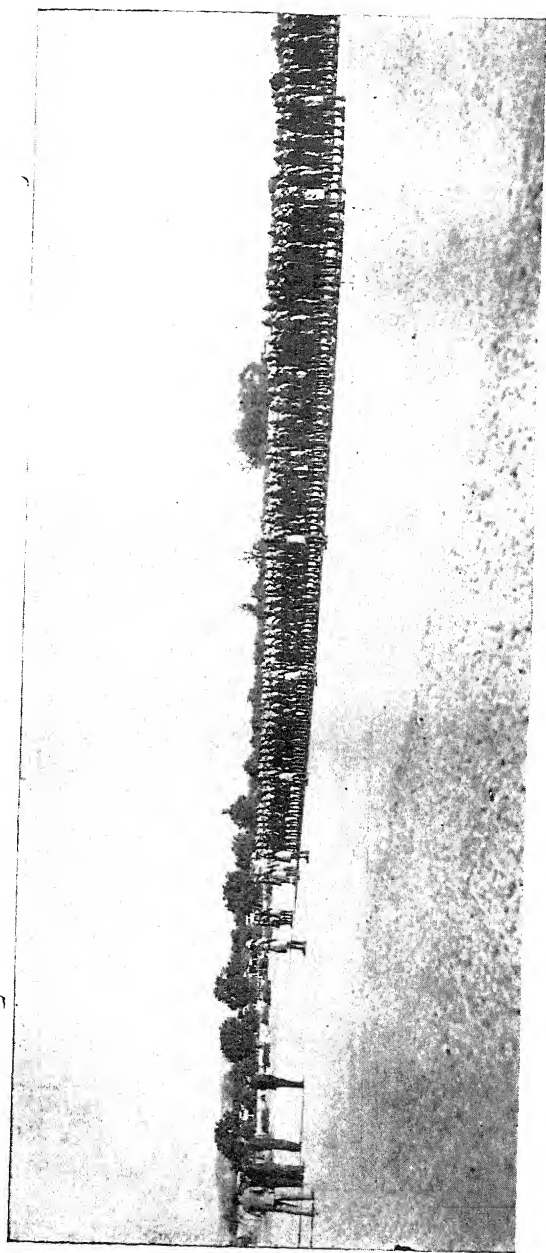
Singh, and Birma Ram, and 2nd-Lieut. Karim Khan returned to the State, and were replaced by Major Gulab Singh, Lieuts. Nag Singh and Ramkaran Ram, and 2nd Lieut. Doodha Ram, who took over the duties of Adjutant.

Major General G.O. De. R. Channer and Colonel F.L. Brayne visited the battalion during June, but, otherwise, there was nothing of interest to report.

During July, August, and September, the rains came. The rainfall in the Kangra Valley during the monsoon is particularly heavy, and these men of Jodhpur State, who had been accustomed to living in a country where the rainfall is scanty and capricious, where rain is considered an unmixed blessing, and where twenty inches of rain during the year is considered abnormally high, were astonished to be living in a place where the annual rainfall is some hundreds of inches. At first, they were delighted and they rather envied the inhabitants of this damp, fertile country. However, the daily and almost incessant deluges of rain for weeks on end began to depress them somewhat eventually.

It was during this time of rain that Brigadier Duncan again visited the battalion, and during the four days he was at Yol, it rained unceasingly. However, he found the men in very good heart, and he was pleased to get an excellent report from the camp commandant of the work being carried out by the battalion—work that was monotonous and dull, but which required constant vigilance on the part of the sentries.

Several unsuccessful attempts at escape were made by the Italian prisoners of war, and in one



The Maharaja of Jodhpur with Major General R. C. Duncan, Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, inspecting the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry before the departure of the battalion from the State.

instance a young Kayamkhani sentry of the battalion shot an Italian Officer, who was seen getting through the barbed wire fence round the camp, through the head.

Various officers inspected the battalion during October and November including Lt.-General H. B. D. Wilcox, G. O. C.-in-Chief, Central Command, Lt.-General Sir F. Gwatkin, Military Adviser-in-Chief, Indian States Forces, and Major General H.T.D. Hickman, Commanding Lahore District.

On January 10th, 1943, orders were received for the move of the battalion to Barrackpore, near Calcutta, the following month. With these orders, Brigadier Beresford, the Camp Commandant, sent Lt.-Colonel Martin a letter of appreciation on the good work carried out by the battalion during the past ten months it had been at Yol and said that it would be missed greatly.

The battalion proceeded to Pathankot on February 4th, 1943, and entrained there for Barrackpore, arriving at its destination on February 9th in relief of the 4/3rd Madras Regiment. It was not, however, to remain long at Barrackpore, for on February 20th, warning orders were received for the move of Bn. HQ and one company to Ondal, one company to Pandaveshwar, one company to Bishnupur, and one company to Pannagarh, all places in Western Bengal where U.S.A. Airfields were located.

On March 2nd, 1943, the battalion left Barrackpore, and by the following evening the

companies had arrived at their various destinations.

Then began a period of guarding American airfields, from which bombers flew to and from Burma on operations. Although the airfields were isolated, and, except for the one at Ondal, nowhere near a town, the work was not without interest, and there was not the depressing atmosphere of a Prisoners of War camp. The heat, however, was intense during the summer.

Major D.A.W. Brown, 14th Punjab Regiment, reported for duty on March 28th as a special service officer in relief of Major Roche, and, a month later, Captain J.C.P. Beloe, 14th Punjab Regiment, was also appointed a special service officer

On July 8th, a warning order was received to show that another move was in the offing, and a week later Bn. H.Q., "B" and "D" companies moved to Jadabpur, Calcutta, and close to Tollygunje, where they were joined shortly after by "A" and "C" companies. A particularly nice house with all modern conveniences and owned by a rich businessman was taken over for the officers mess, while the men were accommodated, some in barracks but mostly in "basha" huts. The battalion had not been long at Jadabpur when the Damodar river burst its banks and did considerable damage to railways and roads over a wide area. "C" company under Captain Dan Singh was sent to do some urgent repair work on the railway near Burdwan, and it earned the thanks of the authorities concerned,

In October, men of the battalion became subscribers for the first time to the Blood Bank and a total of 176 men gave their blood when a touring team visited the battalion. During this month the battalion took on the work of escort duty, which it continued to do for the next few years. Parties of men of the battalion travelled all over India, and this did much to improve their education and broaden their outlook. Places as far apart as Karachi, Colombo, Manipur, and Lahore saw men of the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry.

A trailer fire pump was allotted to the battalion in November, and the unit was made an auxiliary P.A.D. station, and thus became the unofficial guardians and potential rescuers of some five or six units in the vicinity.

On November 20th, the first party, consisting of 1 Indian Officer and 5 N.C.Os, proceeded for attachment to the 1st Patiala Infantry in a forward area. Henceforth, parties went in turns for attachment to a unit in the forward area.

The battalion experienced its first air raid on December 5th, 1943, when about 43 Japanese planes raided Calcutta and dropped bombs, mainly in the dock area where a detachment from the battalion was stationed. The men stood the bombing well, and remained calm and collected throughout, which is more than can be said of the residents of that area, who worked themselves into a state of panic and, consequently, incurred many casualties.

Lt.-Colonel Martin went to Jodhpur on a liaison visit in January 1944, and about the same time, 2nd.-Lieut. Bheem Singh joined

the battalion, and Major Brown was posted to the Tripura State Forces. The battalion was very sorry to lose Major Brown, who was most popular and had done a lot for the unit.

During February, the battalion was visited by various officers—Lt.-General Sir A.G.O.M. Mayne, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Command, inspected the battalion on February 22nd, and His Highness the Maharaja of Jaipur paid an unofficial visit. In April, Major Dhonkal Singh joined the battalion on permanent transfer from the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry as 2nd-in-Command, and, on April 16th, Brigadier R.C. Duncan visited the battalion and stayed for four days, during which he saw the men at training and on their various duties, discussed many matters with the C.O., and was entertained to dinner by the State Officers and Indian Officers in their Messes.

About this time, news was received that a large quantity of "Victory" liquor was ready to be dispatched from Jodhpur provided containers were available. Captain Madan Singh took it upon himself the job of procuring the drums for the liquor, and, after much searching in the Bazar, he managed to get hold of two 40 gallon drums which were promptly sent to Jodhpur. Great hopes of the early arrival of the liquor were entertained, but nothing was heard for some time. Then, two months later, news was received that the precious liquor had actually been dispatched, and, what was more, in the safe keeping of a draft, under whose protection no possible harm could come to it. The troops visualised the glorious sight of the draft's arrival bearing with them the two drums of liquor—but the O.C.

draft on arrival calmly reported that the last he had seen of the two drums of "Victory" liquor was at Phulera station, and that he realised too late as the train was leaving that they had not been loaded in the brake van. There the matter (and the liquor) apparently rested, for the railway authorities repeatedly said they knew nothing about the two barrels. However, Captain Nag Singh, the Quartermaster, was not going to be beaten, and, after tremendous efforts on his part, a message came through that they were at Howrah station. Better late than never, and the liquor had no doubt had plenty of time to mature during its lengthy wanderings !

In August, the battalion was given the job of supplying an officer to act as O.C. train on the newly instituted Assam Military Special. Major Gulab Singh and Captain Madan Singh both did a spell of this duty, which entailed travelling from Sealdah to Amingaon and back, a three days trip with one free day in between.

At about this time, a military "Grow More Food" campaign was started to assist food supplies in the area. The battalion was presented with 15 goats in the hopes that they would multiply exceedingly. However, the goats did not seem to keep fit, and the monsoon brought on many cases of foot-rot, so that such offspring as did materialise, did not have much of a chance.

Throughout this period, small parties were being sent up to the forward area for attachment to the 1st Patiala Infantry in Assam and, later, Burma. This was most useful as the troops gained in experience and saw something of real battle conditions.

His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, General Sir Claude Auchinleck, inspected the battalion on November 3rd, and expressed his satisfaction with all that he saw.

Subedar Major Shivdana Ram left the battalion on November 9th, 1944, on transfer to the pension establishment, and Subedar Jorawar Khan was appointed Subedar Major in his place. All ranks were sorry to see Subedar Major Shivdana Ram go, and several farewell parties were given in his honour.

While at Calcutta, there was no lack of entertainment for the troops. Several Indian ENSA companies gave performances in the lines, and a mobile film unit often visited the lines to give a cinema show to the troops. A large party of men went to see a military motor show in December, which was organised by the Sub Area, and at which many strange vehicles were seen for the first time. At this show, the battalion supplied a detachment to take part in a realistic demonstration of an attack on a convoy, and in which it was shown how vehicle recovery was effected. A small party had the good fortune to be the guests of the Royal Navy for an hour or so, as they were shown over a Royal Naval cruiser, which was anchored not far from the barracks.

In February 1945, Lt.-Colonel S.F. Martin went on leave to the United Kingdom, and during his absence, Major Dhonkal Singh officiated in command, with Lt.-Colonel H.G. Boulter as senior special service officer to assist him. Early in the month, Captain Madan Singh, who had been with the battalion



Lieut.-Colonel S. F. Martin, 15th Punjab Regiment, who commanded the
2nd Jodhpur Infantry for over 3 years.

since it was raised, was transferred to the Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre.

During 1945, the battalion was given the duty of supplying escorts to parties of Japanese prisoners of war on their way to Central India. This was a responsible job, and one calling for the maximum vigilance, especially as rail accommodation was in many cases not as good as it might have been. Over 150 Japanese prisoners were escorted during the first six months of the year, not a large number, but a large proportion of the total prisoners passing through.

The battalion was represented at the "Victory in Europe" parade, when Major Dhonkal Singh, Captain Doodha Ram, and 100 Indian other ranks took part. The detachment bore itself well and compared very favourably with other units on the parade. The parade ended with a March Past at which His Excellency the Governor took the salute.

The battalion was inspected by Lt.-General Sir R. O'Connor, the new General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Command, on June 4th. He walked round all ranks, was introduced to the officers, and later remarked that he was very pleased with the drill and turn out.

On July 4th, information was received that Lt.-Colonel S.F. Martin had been appointed Commandant, C.S.D.I.C. (I), Delhi, and that Lt.-Colonel Ram Singh, D.S.O., was transferred from the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry to succeed him in command of the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry. Lt.-Colonel Martin had commanded the 2nd

Jodhpur Infantry for just over $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, and took over command on the arrival of the battalion at Allahabad from Jodhpur. The battalion was young, inexperienced, and raw at that time, and Lt.-Colonel Martin had many difficulties to contend with. He proved himself to be a first rate Commanding Officer—a disciplinarian, but kind, just, and firm, and with a strong sense of humour, and he was most popular with all ranks. Much credit should go to him for the excellent spirit, which prevailed in the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry, and for the good name it achieved. Much of the work the battalion had had to do, although important, was monotonous and dull, but the morale of the troops remained high, and Lt.-Colonel Martin helped a lot towards that, and towards improving efficiency.

Lt.-Colonel Ram Singh had served throughout the war with the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry as second-in-command in Eritrea, Egypt, and North Africa, and had officiated in command for some months after the battalion joined the 10th Indian Infantry Brigade in the forward area in Italy. Although he had been designated "Liaison Officer" for the seven companies of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, which took part in the landing operations at Salerno, Italy, in September 1943, he had, in actual fact, commanded those companies. He was the first man of the battalion to land on the Salerno beaches, so that, as it has been officially reported that the men of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry were the first Indian troops to land on the mainland of Italy, it can be reasonably assumed that Lt.-Colonel Ram Singh was the first Indian officer or other rank to set foot on the mainland of Italy. He behaved with great gallantry during those 21

arduous days on the beaches, and went about his duties calm and collected throughout, continually visiting his troops in the forward lines. For his gallantry during the operations, he was awarded a well-deserved D.S.O.

This role of the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry was changed from that of an "escorting" battalion in September 1945, when half the battalion was employed guarding several thousands of I.N.A. prisoners, and the remainder did other local duties.

During the disturbances at Calcutta towards the end of November 1945, Captain Hamir Singh, the adjutant, was seriously injured in the face by a stone thrown at him when driving to Area Headquarters and 2 men of the battalion were slightly injured, while one of the battalion trucks was burnt by the crowds.

On this occasion, Sepoy Prem Singh, who was the driver of the truck, in which Captain Hamir Singh was travelling, showed great presence of mind and gallantry. Hamir Singh, who was sitting in front, fell unconscious across Prem Singh's knees. Despite the fact that there was a large threatening mob outside and stones were being hurled at the lorry, Prem Singh, who had already been struck on the shoulder by a stone, held Captain Hamir Singh by one hand and the steering wheel by the other, and crouching low, he turned the car and drove off to safety.

Early in December 1945, the battalion was moved to Jhikargacha, 66 miles from Calcutta, where it was employed guarding several thousands of prisoners of the "Indian National Army".

This was a most unpleasant job, but the battalion carried out its duties splendidly, and many prisoners, who attempted to escape, were arrested by men of the battalion.

CHAPTER V.

The Third Jodhpur Infantry.

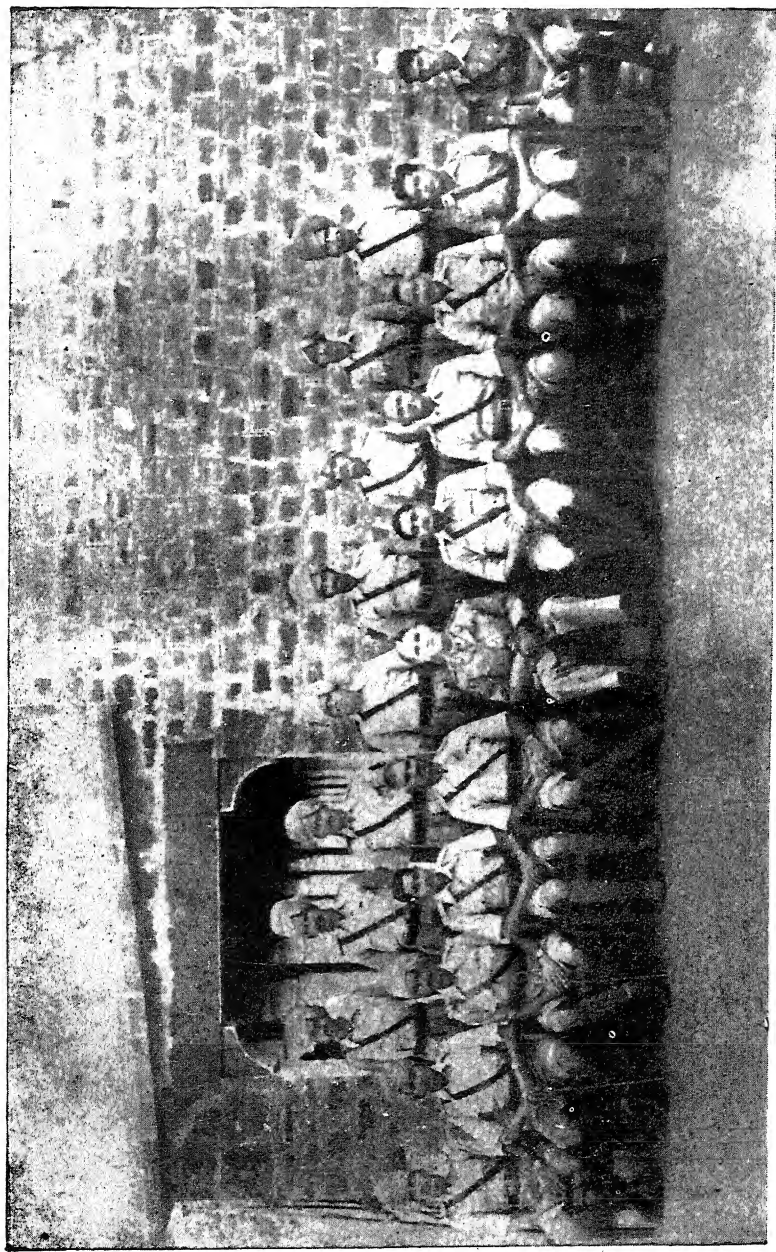
WHEN it was decided by His Highness to offer the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry for service outside the State, either overseas or in British India, and a promise had been obtained from G.H.Q. that arms and equipment would be made available for a new battalion, Brigadier Duncan, under the orders of His Highness, commenced to raise a third battalion, to be known as the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry.

The offer of the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry had been made conditional on the posting of a senior officer of the Indian Army to command the battalion, as Lt.-Colonel Heer Singh had no knowledge of English, and he was, therefore, not suitable to command a unit to be employed outside the State, while no other officer of seniority or experience was available.

There may be some who think that the raising of a battalion would be a comparatively simple matter for the officer who raises it and for the officer, who takes over command. There is however, a tremendous lot to organise and think out, much to arrange, and countless difficulties to surmount. N.C.Os to be chosen and specialist appointments to be filled, a large clerical staff to be enrolled and placed, very many matters in connection with pay, allowances, equipment, arms, and clothing, etc.,—in fact, so many things to organise and decide that it would bore the reader if this was recorded in any detail.

It is, therefore, all the more to the credit of Lt.-Colonel Heer Singh that he not only took over command of the new battalion, and gave Brigadier Duncan invaluable help in the raising of it, but he continued in command of the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry until its departure from the State, as Lt.-Colonel S.F. Martin did not take over the command of the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry until its arrival at Allahabad. And Lt.-Colonel Heer Singh did both those jobs extremely well, which, I think everyone will agree, was a remarkable performance.

By December 1941, when the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry came into being, the Jodhpur State Forces had expanded considerably, and recruiting at Headquarters was on a large scale. It was necessary to send a constant stream of recruits to the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre and Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre, so that they would be in a position to supply trained soldiers to their active units serving outside the State, whenever demanded. The training of a recruit, up to the standard of a trained soldier, is a long business, particularly in the case of an armoured regiment like the Jodhpur Lancers, so that it was necessary to be continually looking into the future in connection with recruiting. There was no dearth of men and boys offering themselves for enlistment in the Jodhpur State Forces at that time, but it could not be known when saturation point would be reached, or when the number offering themselves for enlistment would decrease. Many of those who appeared at the Headquarters office were on the old side or young boys. There were, also, many, who were considered up to the standard of the Jodhpur Lancers or Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre,



State and Indian Officers of the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry at the time of the raising of the Battalion, with Brigadier R. C. Duncan.

but were found to be medically unfit. It seemed a pity to reject these and so waste them, so it was decided to enlist many of the older ones or young boys, or those rejected by the medical officer for some minor defect, in the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry.

The State officers for the battalion again presented the greatest difficulty, but as the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry was to be a State Service unit, and there was no question of its being employed outside the State, there was not the same necessity for English speaking officers, as in the case of the other units.

The following State Officers were appointed to the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry, or joined it shortly after it was raised:—

Lt.-Colonel Heer Singh .. Officer Commanding
Captain Birma Ram
Captain Madho Singh.
Lieut. Hardeena Ram.
2nd.-Lieut. Pirthi Singh.
State Officer Cadet Samman Khan.

The composition of the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry was 2 companies Rajputs, 1 company Jats, and 1 company Kayamkhanies.

A number of old Indian officers and N.C.Os were transferred from the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry to the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry, and these formed a nucleus to train the large number of recruits that joined the battalion during the first few months of 1942.

Captain Mamdu Khan, 2nd.-Lieuts. Rambux Ram and Ramchander Ram were posted to the

battalion during 1942 and 1943, Rambux Ram later being appointed Adjutant.

During the first half of that year, the battalion was fully occupied in training and carrying out station duties. It was, however, in August that some of its men were required for work of a more dangerous nature elsewhere.

Serious disturbances broke out in Sind during April and early May 1942. These were caused by the rising of a large Mahomedan tribe known as Hurs. A section of the Jodhpur Railway runs through Sind up to Hyderabad, and this line is important from a strategic point of view on account of the transport over it of troops and grain to and from Karachi. A stationmaster and some members of the railway staff of the Jodhpur Railway were murdered by Hurs at various stations on the line to Hyderabad, and so serious did the situation become that, on May 10th, 1942, the Chief Minister called an urgent meeting, which was attended by the Manager, Jodhpur Railway, Brigadier Duncan, Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, the Inspector General of Police, and a representative of the Sind Government. Major Gordon, the Manager of the Jodhpur Railway, stated bluntly that unless troops or armed police were sent at once into Sind and posted at the various stations for the protection of the staff, he would have to close all traffic on this line, as the staff were in a state of panic and work was very nearly at a standstill. The representative of the Sind Government replied that he did not think it would be feasible to send troops there at short notice and that extra police were not available. The Chief Minister, therefore, instructed the Commandant,



Lieut.-Colonel Rao Bahadur Heer Singh, who was the first
Commandant, 2nd Jodhpur Infantry and later
Commandant, 3rd Jodhpur Infantry.

Jodhpur State Forces, to send a detachment of troops as early as possible to protect all stations on the line as far as Mirpur Khas, close to Hyderabad, and also to provide military guards on all trains to and from Jodhpur and Hyderabad.

That same evening of May 10th, a detachment of the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry consisting of Captain Birma Ram, 3 Indian Officers, and 144 Indian other ranks entrained at Jodhpur and were on their way to Sind, and within 24 hours of the holding of the conference, troops of the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry were in position to protect the following railway stations in Sind.—

Khokhropar.
Vasar Bah.
Jalu-ju-Chaunro.
Parche-ji-Veri.
Chhor.
Hasisar.
Dhoro Naro.
Pithoro.
Shadipalli.
Mirpur Khas.

The 3rd Jodhpur Infantry had taken on its first active duty outside the State five months after the commencement of its raising.

A few days later, Brigadier Duncan and the Manager, Jodhpur Railway, went to Sind to see the detachment and inspect the arrangements made by them. They travelled in the mail train from Jodhpur, but from Khokhropar on the Jodhpur State-Sind border they went by rail-Motor accompanied by an armed guard. They found that excellent arrangements had been made at

each station and that, with the arrival of troops, the Railway staff had completely calmed down. Anyone who looked like a Hur and who approached a station, had been atonce arrested and sent to Hyderabad for verification, and at several stations there were small batches of wild looking, sullen men tied together by ropes or chains waiting dispatch to Hyderabad.

Although nothing serious happened on the Jodhpur Railway after the arrival of troops at the various stations and the posting of armed guards on trains, the depredations by the Hurs continued elsewhere in Sind and there were several ugly incidents on the North Western Railway from Hyderabad to Lahore and a number of people were murdered. So bad did the situation become that a force known as the Upper Sind Force consisting of two Indian brigades was sent to Sind, with Headquarters at Hyderabad, and on its formation, the detachment of the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry came under the orders of the Commander of this Force.

One incident, which happened at the small wayside station of Hasisar, is worth recording. The small detachment there consisted of 10 sepoys under Naik Kan Singh. When a passenger train halted at this station one morning, 2 men got out, and walked towards 2 camels, which had been brought by a man about an hour before and tethered a hundred yards or so from the station platform. The men, who looked like soldiers but were not Sindis, then mounted the camels and rode off. There is no village within 20 miles of Hasisar station, and Naik Kan Singh, becoming suspicious, shouted out to them to halt. Instead of stopping,

the men urged their camels to a greater speed, whereupon Naik Kan Singh ordered his men to stand by, and shouted out to the men that if they did not halt, he would open fire. This had the desired effect, and the 2 men returned to the station and were questioned by Kan Singh, who, not being satisfied with their answers, sent them into Hyderabad under escort. Both men proved to be deserters from an Indian Army regiment.

Although the Upper Sind Force was broken up about a year later, the Sind Government requested the Jodhpur Government to keep the detachment in Sind for the protection of the stations on the line, and for military guards on trains. Except for a small party of 1 Indian Officer and 33 Indian other ranks to provide military guards for trains, the detachment was withdrawn on March 8th, 1944, after having been employed there nearly two years. During the whole time it was there, there was only one incident of a train being fired on and there were no cases of attacks on railway stations, whereas there were several such incidents on the North Western Railway from Karachi to Lahore.

Early in August 1942, the R.A.F Station at Jodhpur came into being, and its importance as a R.A.F. Station increased as time went by, and at times as many as 500 or 600 planes were located there.

The protection of the aerodrome, hangars, and workshops was important, and this duty was delegated to the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry. The strength of the detachment for aerodrome protection duty was small to start with, but it

was increased continually, until it amounted to 1 State officer, 3 Indian officers, and 144 Indian other ranks. Excellent work was carried out by the detachment, and the officer commanding, R.A.F. Station, Jodhpur, reported several times to the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, of the invaluable work being done.

On January 13th, 1945, the large airfield at Salawas, 16 miles from Jodhpur, was taken into use, and from that date a small detachment of the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry was sent for protection duty. The strength of this detachment was increased gradually until it amounted to 1 Indian officer, and 51 Indian other ranks. This detachment, also, did very good work, and one small incident recorded below in a letter from the Officer Commanding, Salawas, may be of interest.—

“To:—Sepoy Muner Khan, 3rd Jodhpur Infantry at R. A. F. Salawas.

You are congratulated for apprehending 3 people in the act of stealing R.A.F. property at Salawas and for refusing to accept the bribe of rupees five which was offered to you by the thieves.

N. B. DYKE,
*Squadron Leader, Commanding,
355 M.U. R.A.F.”*

The 3rd Jodhpur Infantry was composed from the start of old or oldish men, and boys. Every now and then volunteers for the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre or Jodhpur Infantry

Training Centre were called for from amongst the boys, who a year or two after enlistment, had developed sufficiently. In this way, over 150 boys were transferred from the battalion to one of the Training Centres as recruits for the field service units.

Lt.-Colonel Heer Singh was awarded the title of Rao Bahadur on June 8th, 1944. Seldom has an award been more fully deserved. His hard work and selfless devotion to duty, his great sense of right and wrong, his fairness to all and his strong personality had a marked effect on the 2nd and 3rd Jodhpur Infantry, both of which he had commanded from the outset. The Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, will never forget the invaluable help afforded him by Lt.-Colonel Rao Bahadur Heer Singh.

In the autumn of 1943, the old Sardar Infantry lines had become greatly congested, as both the Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre and the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry were accommodated in them, and the strength of the former was more than that of a battalion and the 3rd Jodhpur Infantry was up to full strength. It was, accordingly, arranged that some old buildings on the Ratanada Road, which had been partially built for a battalion of the Indian Army during the first World War but had not been completed, should be repaired and added to. Cookhouses and new latrines were constructed, all the barracks renovated, and a temple built.

The 3rd Jodhpur Infantry moved into these barracks on December 11th, 1943, and the battalion is most comfortably housed there.

The 3rd Jodhpur Infantry has carried out its duties as a State Service unit in the most exemplary manner. Its work has not been spectacular, but it has done all that it has been asked to do willingly and well and it has proved its value on many occasions.

Subedar Major and Honorary Lieut. Sultan Singh, Bahadur, O.B.I. (late of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry) was awarded the Order of British India, first class, with the title of "Sardar Bahadur", and Subedar Achal Singh was awarded the Order of British India, second class, with the title of "Bahadur" in the New Year's Honours on January 1st, 1946.

CHAPTER VI.

The Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre.

THE Training unit, which was responsible for the training of recruits and for the supply of trained soldiers for the Jodhpur Lancers was, at the outbreak of war, a horsed squadron under the command of Captain Thakur Zabar Singh, grandson of the renowned late His Highness General Maharaja Sir Pratap Singh. There the recruits learnt, in all its phases, the art of riding and the drill and tactics and customs of a horsed cavalry regiment.

So it remained until February 1941. This training was no new thing, and Captain Zabar Singh had no difficulty in supplying the required number of trained soldiers for the Jodhpur Lancers, which were serving with the 1st Indian Cavalry Brigade on the North West Frontier of India.

However, as has been related elsewhere, the Jodhpur Lancers were then selected for mechanisation, and the Jodhpur Training Squadron, later to be known as the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre, had, of course, to follow suit.

The process of mechanisation of a horsed unit is, as everyone must realise, a most complicated business. Almost everything—and the words “almost everything” are no exaggeration—had to be changed, and, to a great extent, the men of the unit had to forget most of what they had learnt before and start again from the beginning. Where the men had learnt about a horse, now

they had to learn about a motor vehicle. They knew about horses—living creatures which they loved—but now they had to know about mechanical contrivances, which they, being horse minded, could not consider as 'alive'. Drill, tactics, methods of training had all to be changed.

When the orders for the reorganisation of the Training squadron from a horsed to a mechanised basis, were received, it was expected that the squadron would be transferred to the Indian Armoured Corps Training Centre at Ferozepore, where expert instructors were available and where workshops, garages, and all appliances existed. At Jodhpur, neither Brigadier Duncan nor Major Zabar Singh knew anything about mechanisation or mechanised training, and, except for the State garage, there were no workshops, etc.

Brigadier Duncan was asked to go to G.H.Q., New Delhi, to discuss the whole matter. On arrival there, he was told that it was regretted that the transfer of the squadron to Ferozepore could not be sanctioned, because the training establishment there was already over-full, as the mechanisation of cavalry recruits of the Indian army was in full swing. He was told that a mechanised training centre should be created at Jodhpur and all training would have to be carried out there. It was mentioned that some N.C.Os from Indian cavalry regiments, already mechanised, might be available shortly to help in the early stages of training. He asked if he, Major Zabar Singh, and some of his officers and N.C.Os could attend a course at Ferozepore; but he was told that even this was not possible, but



Lt.-Col. Th. Zabar Singh, M. B. E., who was Commandant,
Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre, throughout the War.

that they might go there for a few days on an unofficial visit to get a general idea of mechanised training, and to find out what would be required for the Training Centre at Jodhpur.

So Brigadier Duncan returned to Jodhpur, somewhat worried and perplexed, and he and Major Zabar Singh at once started to tackle the rather formidable proposition of turning the horsed training squadron into a mechanised squadron, and constructing garages, workshops, washing platforms, crew control rooms, wireless signalling rooms, etc., where at that time, only stables and barracks existed.

His Highness and his Government realising the necessity for expending a considerable amount of money on the construction of new buildings if the mechanised training centre was to have a chance of success, put no obstacles in the way of the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, and sanctioned the necessary increase in expenditure without demur. The Public Works Department was most helpful, and a debt of gratitude is owed to Mr. Edgar, Public Works Minister, and Mr. Fergusson, Executive Engineer, (now Chief Engineer) for all they did to carry out the constructions so expeditiously and well. Indeed, the help and advice given by Mr. Fergusson throughout the war, not only in connection with the buildings constructed in the lines of the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre, but in those of the other units of the Jodhpur State Forces, have been invaluable. Mr. C. H. Wilson, Electrical Engineer, was also tremendously helpful as regards the lighting of the lines, and he very seldom refused any of the many requests made to him for additional electric lights.

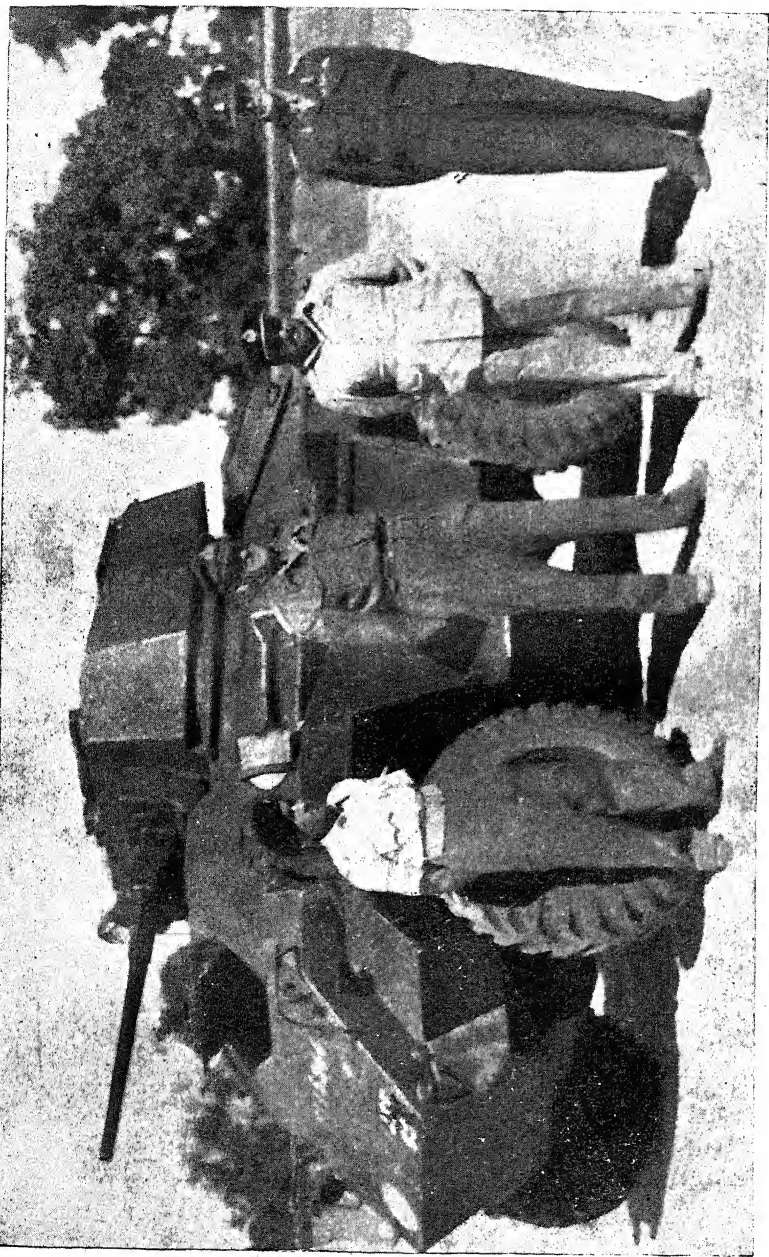
The construction of garages, and workshops, and the conversion of some of the stables into signalling, education, and crew control rooms was taken in hand at once, and the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, and the Commandant, Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre, had many discussions regarding the new training and organisation.

One of the first things to do was to dispose of the horses, not only of the Training squadron, but also of 289 horses, which had been received from the Jodhpur Lancers. His Highness had approved of the raising of the Jodhpur Bodyguard Squadron, but until this unit came into being, there were 560 horses on the strength of the Jodhpur Lancers, which were an added responsibility for the Commandant, who had already many other things to worry about.

By arrangement with the Officer Commanding, Jodhpur Lancers, Lieut. Bhopal Singh, 4 Indian Officers, and 25 Indian Other Ranks were sent from the regiment to the Training Centre, while Lieut. Mangal Singh was transferred to the newly raised Jodhpur Bodyguard Squadron as Commandant.

Major Zabar Singh, Lieut. Bhopal Singh, and 8 Indian Other Ranks went to Ferozepore for about a fortnight, and were attached for a few days at a time to the various cadres by stages. Brigadier Duncan also went to Ferozepore for a few days to see the general training carried out there. On their return, a complete programme of training was worked out on the lines of the Indian Armoured Corps Training Centre.

As no vehicles were received for sometime, 4 old Chevrolet vehicles were borrowed from



Inspection of the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief.
From Left to Right—Lieut.-Colonel Zabar Singh, M. B. E., Commandant, Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre.
His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India.
His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur Jodhpur.
Major General R. C. Duncan, M. V. O., O. B. E., Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces.

the State garage. However, the first batch of 5 Albions and Morris lorries arrived at the end of May, followed by 13 vehicles shortly afterwards. 4 N.C.Os from the 16th Light Cavalry and the Poona Horse reported for duty. Work then started in earnest.

As there were no qualified instructors available, in the early days, except for the 4 N.C.Os on loan from the Indian Army, two civilians, Mr. Nadir Shaw and Mr. Banerji, who had been employed as instructors during the raising of No. 54 (Jodhpur) General Purposes Transport Company, R. I. A. S. C., were re-employed at the Training Centre and given the rank of Jemadar, later being promoted to Honorary Lieutenant and then Honorary Captain. Captain Banerji was appointed Technical officer and Captain Nadir Shaw D.&M. officer. Both these officers were of the greatest assistance at the Training Centre throughout the war.

After a few months, 7 N.C.O. instructors, who had qualified at the Fighting Vehicles School, arrived from the regiment, and the 4 N.C.Os from the Indian Army returned to their regiments. Gradually, as time went on, more I.Os and N.C.Os went on courses in D.&M., wireless, etc., and returned fully qualified.

The greatest difficulty was experienced in wireless signalling training, owing to the shortage of equipment. A considerable number of recruits had to be trained as gunner operators and driver operators, and the lack of equipment was a great worry to Major Zabbar Singh. However, he got over this difficulty to a great extent by improvisations. Many dummy keys

were made in the workshops, car lamps were used, hand made funnels attached to rubber tubing were connected by holes in the wall to the next room.

It was not until June 1943 that the first W/T set was received, and that was a No. 1 set, which was already obsolete. Later, several No. 19 sets were received, and, from then on, there was no difficulty in signalling training. The good work carried out by Jemadar Guman Singh as regards signal training is worth recording, as he had many difficulties to contend with.

Education was another problem, as comparatively few educated boys were prepared to enlist as recruits. This affected the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre much more than the Infantry Training Centre, as it was essential for the boys of the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre to have some education before enlistment if they were to grasp the intricacies of mechanised training. Consequently, long hours of educational training were included in the training programme, and most of the recruits were in the Training Centre school for as much as 4 hours daily. Indeed, Major Zabar Singh worked his recruits to the limit, and, for most of the war period, they were working for $11\frac{1}{2}$ hours a day. The result, however, proved that it was well worth it. The boys worked willingly and well and their general health was excellent.

As time went on, there was a constant enlargement of the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre. More garages were built, a second washing platform, an assembly ground, a

pellet range, additional workshops and lecture rooms, etc., etc., were constructed. The strength of the unit was, by 1943, larger than the parent unit, the Jodhpur Lancers. The Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre started the war with 2 State Officers, 5 Indian Officers, and 134 Indian Other Ranks and recruits, but, by the beginning of 1944, it consisted of 13 State Officers, 17 Indian Officers, 703 Indian Other Ranks and recruits, 128 Non-Combatants, and 84 vehicles.

An innovation was the creation of a school for the children of soldiers of the Jodhpur State Forces. This was located in the old signalling school of the Jodhpur Lancers and it was designated "The Junior Military School". The boys lived with their guardians in the Lines and clothes and food were provided at a cheap rate. This school proved most popular from the outset, and by the Summer of 1945, over 180 boys were attending it.

Many distinguished officers visited the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre. His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester spent over 1½ hours on July 9th, 1942, watching the recruits at work, and he was most interested in all he saw. His Excellency Sir Claude Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief, paid a detailed visit lasting over 3 hours and expressed the greatest satisfaction at all he saw. Among other officers who visited the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre were Major General Gairdner, Brigadiers Trappes-Lomax and Inskip, while Lt.-General Sir F. Gwatkin and Major General C.O. Harvey inspected the Training Centre several times while holding the appointment of Military Adviser-in-Chief, Indian States Forces.

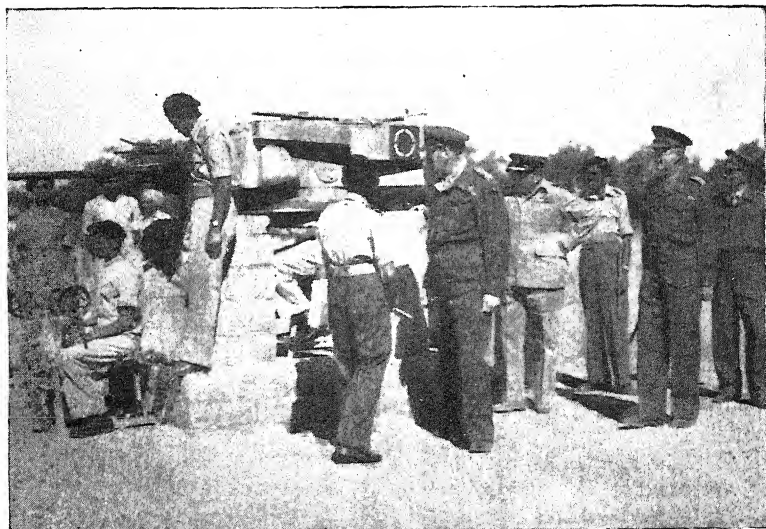
Recruits were taught to drive under almost all possible conditions. A disused polo ground was used for the first stage of the recruits D and M training. Here they could drive round and round without doing any harm to themselves or other people; here they got used to the feel of the steering wheel, brakes, clutch, etc. Then they were taken out to drive along the open road. They learnt to drive in congested areas, such as the City, and in traffic; there was an excellent area to practise them in cross country driving, where they learnt to drive up and down hills, over broken ground, and in sand. There was night driving three nights a week, long distance drives, and they were practised in driving in gasmasks.

Driving and Maintenance was, of course, only a small part of what they had to learn. All recruits had to qualify as 3rd grade drivers. Then, the majority started to become specialists—some learnt to be driver mechanics or gunner mechanics, while others became driver operators or gunner operators. It was amazing what the recruits had to learn, and did learn, in a comparatively short space of time, considering the majority of recruits had received no education at all before enlistment, owing to the fact that few boys, who had been educated in schools were prepared to enlist as sowars or sepoy.

Major Keshri Singh was appointed second-in-command in 1943, but retired in February 1945, when he was succeeded as second-in-command of the Training Centre by Major Sultan Singh, who had passed a course at the Staff College, Quetta.



His Excellency General Sir Claude Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief in India, inspecting the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre.



His Excellency General Sir Claude Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief in India, inspecting the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre.

On June 3rd, 1943, Major Zabar Singh was awarded the M.B.E. in the King's Birthday Honours List. Seldom has an award been better deserved. His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur approved of his promotion to the rank of Lt.-Colonel from January 24th, 1944.

Lt.-Colonel Zabar Singh deserves the very greatest credit for all he did as Officer Commanding, Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre. He had a great deal to do with the initial formation of the Training Centre, and with the various stages it passed through towards enlargement and training. He was considerably handicapped by a shortage of officers, and, for most of the war, was very understaffed, so that some credit is due to his officers and N.C.Os. However, the high standard reached and maintained, and the wonderful spirit amongst all ranks, was mainly due to Lt.-Colonel Zabar Singh's personality and drive, his unbounded enthusiasm and keenness, his intense loyalty, his strong sense of discipline, and his unfailing interest in the welfare and efficiency of his men.

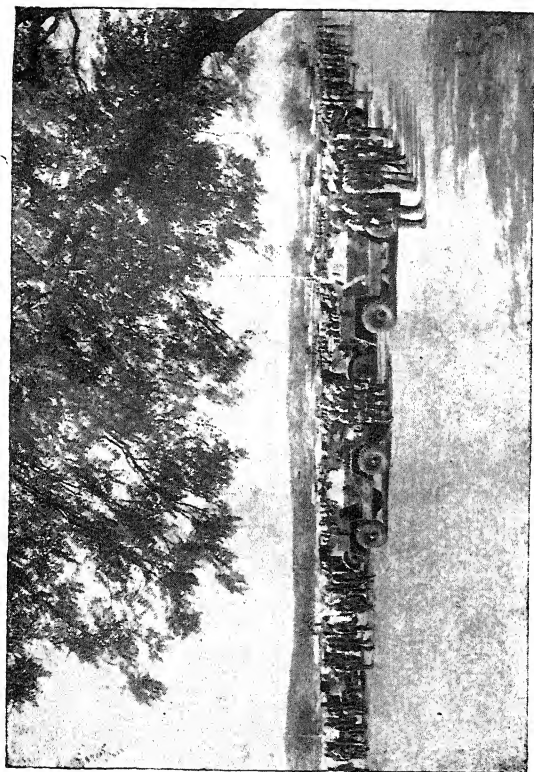
Many senior and experienced officers, who inspected or visited the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre during the war reported that they were greatly impressed by the high standard attained and the splendid spirit prevailing, but it is probable that few of them realised the many difficulties that had had to be overcome to achieve such an excellent result. His Highness and the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, were lucky to have a man like Lt.-Colonel Zabar Singh, who possessed character, enthusiasm, and energy to such a marked degree, to command the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre from the

start, and to continue in command of it until the end of the war.

In order to show that the praise accorded in this history to the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre is fully deserved, the following extract from the report by Brigadier R.D. Inskip, C.B., C.I.E., Deputy Military Adviser-in-Chief (Training), Indian States Forces, in December 1945, is recorded:—

“Much has been said about the excellence of the training and administration at this Centre and I am confident in saying that no such remarks were in any way an exaggeration of the true state of affairs.

“Lt.-Colonel Zabar Singh is a man of exceptional ability. He never spares himself and demands a very high standard from his subordinates with the result that his Centre is as efficient as any I have seen throughout the Army in India.”



The Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre in squadron column.

CHAPTER VII.

The Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre.

WHEN the war started, the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry was without a training company. Its recruits were, of course, trained separately, but they formed part of the H.Q. Company. It was not until November, 1939, that the Jodhpur Training Company came into being. It was, for some months, commanded by Captain Bahadur Singh, until he was succeeded by Captain Gulab Singh, who was sent from the battalion, which was then at Nowshera.

Of the early days of the Jodhpur Training Company there is little to relate. The Jodhpur Sardar Infantry was employed on guard duties in Eritrea, and the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry was doing the same duty in the Punjab, so that there was no demand for reinforcements.

The Jodhpur Training Company was expanded to become the Jodhpur Training Battalion at the end of April 1942, and Lt. Colonel Jawahir Singh, who had arrived from overseas, was appointed to command it. The battalion consisted of 2 companies, "A" company to supply reinforcements for the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, while "B" Company was for the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry.

During the summer months, two large drafts, amounting to nearly 350 men, were demanded for the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry to bring the total number of reinforcements with the battalion to 40%. This large demand had been unexpected, and the training battalion was hardly in a

position to supply so many trained soldiers. In actual fact, at least 150 men sent out had only 4 or 5 months service and had not fully completed their recruits training.

Almost throughout the war, there was a shortage of really efficient officers at the Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre. The reason for this has been explained elsewhere, and really all boils down the fact that men and boys of the high standard of education required of an officer with a really good knowledge of English, which is essential, and who are physically fit, are few and far between in Marwar. There was no difficulty in obtaining sepoys or sowars—they came in in their hundreds—many of them became excellent N.C.Os, and Indian officers, but few were up to the standard required of a State officer. Lt.-Colonel Jawahir Singh tackled his job manfully and well and achieved much success, and he was ably assisted by his Adjutant, Captain Magan Singh. Both these officers worked amazingly hard under great difficulties and never spared themselves, and most of the credit for the high standard achieved at the Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre should go to them.

His Highness was pleased to grant the dignity of "Gold" to Lt.-Colonel Jawahir Singh in February 1943 and he was awarded the "M.B.E." in the King's Birthday Honours List in June 1945, both of which were very fully deserved by him.

In July 1942, His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, who had flown out from England on a tour of India, paid a short visit to Jodhpur. He inspected the Training Centre on parade and

walked down the ranks, asking many questions, and evincing great interest in all he saw.

His Excellency General Sir Claude Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief in India, who paid a short visit to Jodhpur in February 1945, also inspected the Infantry Training Centre. Lt.-General Sir F. Gwatkin, and Major General C. O. Harvey, who held the appointment of Military Adviser-in-Chief, Indian States Forces, during the war, carried out an annual inspection, and, Brigadier R. D. Inskip Deputy Military Adviser-in-Chief (Training), also paid a detailed visit to the Centre.

As the war progressed, the training became more and more extensive and complicated. Many new weapons were received, among which were six pr. anti-tank guns, 3" mortars, and sten and Tommy guns. A well planned assault course was made, and all recruits had to undergo a realistic battle course. Mechanised training started in 1942, for which some vehicles were received from the Government of India, while others were provided by the State, and garages were built.

A Records and Accounts section was started in October 1943 to deal with the evergrowing mass of accounts and records to be kept at the Centre, and 2nd.-Lieut. (later Lieut.) Sawant Singh was appointed Records and Accounts Officer. Lieut. Sardar Singh, a pensioned officer of the Jodhpur Lancers, carried out the duties of Quarter Master for several years during the war.

Throughout the war, there was a splendid spirit of endeavour at the Jodhpur Infantry

Training Centre. Many difficulties had to be overcome, and much credit should go to Lt.-Colonel Jawahir Singh, M.B.E., and his small staff of officers for the fact that these difficulties were, in general, surmounted. There was no single instance where a demand for reinforcements, either for officers or Indian other ranks, was not met, except for an occasional demand for technical personnel.

The general result was good, and the standard maintained at the Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre compared very favourably with many Indian Army Infantry Training Centres.

To end this short account of the activities of the Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre, the following extract from a report by Brigadier R. D. Inskip, C. B., C. I. E., Deputy Military Adviser-in-Chief, (Training), who carried out a most detailed inspection of the Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre in December 1945, is worth recording. This report goes to show the excellent spirit prevailing among all ranks of the Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre and the high standard attained:—

“I most heartily congratulate Lt.-Colonel Jawahir Singh on the enormous improvement he has effected this year on all aspects of training and administration at his Centre. I have written a long report, so as to enable him to render what is really sound and efficient still better.

“I would like to bring to notice the work of the Company Commander (late Training Adjutant), Captain Magan Singh. This officer I would grade as not less than “outstanding” in

keenness, knowledge, power of command, and all-round ability.

“Lt.-Colonel Jawahir Singh is fortunate in having such a keen and enthusiastic team under his command and, with he himself to set the pace, I feel confident that this Centre will go on from strength to strength. The Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre is by far the best Centre I have seen in the Southern, Western, and Rajputana Circles.”

CHAPTER VIII.

The Jodhpur Demonstration Company.

SOMETIME in October, 1942, Brigadier Duncan received a letter from the Military Adviser-in-Chief, Indian States Forces, to say that a Demonstration Company was urgently required at the Tactical School of India, Poona, and to ask if this company could possibly be supplied from the Jodhpur Infantry Training Centre. The Military Adviser-in-Chief stated in his letter that he realised that it would not be easy to supply this company at short notice, but he knew, from previous experience in his dealings with the Headquarters, Jodhpur State Forces, that the call would be met if it was at all possible.

The request was entirely unexpected, but although the formation of this company was not an easy matter, it was decided to send one. There was, at that time, a sufficient number of trained soldiers at the Infantry Training Centre to supply the company in addition to those required for the provision of reinforcements for the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry and 2nd Jodhpur Infantry, but the selection of an officer to command it, was the main difficulty, as no suitable officer was available. Eventually, Major Keshri Singh, second-in-command of the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre, was selected to command the company until a suitable officer of the Indian Army was made available, and Lieut. Malam Singh was appointed second-in-command.

The company, which consisted of 2 State officers, 3 Indian officers, and 130 Indian

other ranks, left Jodhpur for Poona in November, 1942. It was accommodated there in hutted barracks adjoining the Tactical School, and 3 trucks were allotted to it for transport. After a few days spent in settling down in its new quarters, work was started on the preparation of schemes, made out by one of the instructors to be carried out by the Demonstration Company, for the students.

Brigadier Duncan visited the company shortly after its arrival, and he found all ranks were in good heart, and the Commandant of the School was pleased at what he had seen of the work of the company and the general bearing of the men.

In October, 1943, Captain A.C. Hobbs, 15th Punjab Regiment, arrived to take over the Company from Major Keshri Singh, who returned to Jodhpur.

Captain Hobbs, from the start, showed the greatest interest in the men and the work. He was hard working, kind, and firm, and the men soon grew to love and respect him. Brigadier Duncan paid a second visit to the company after Captain Hobbs had been commanding it for a few months, and the Commandant spoke in glowing terms of the excellent and useful work in the way of demonstrations being carried out by the company.

In April, 1944, the Tactical School was transferred from Poona to Dehra Dun, and, at the same time, it was decided to employ a battalion for demonstration purposes at the school instead of a company. Consequently,

Headquarters, Jodhpur State Forces, were approached for permission to employ the Jodhpur Demonstration Company at the Indian Military Academy. This permission was readily granted, and the company took up its quarters in the grounds of the Indian Military Academy and soon got to work.

In June, 1945, orders were received posting Captain Hobbs back to his Regiment. His departure was much regretted by all ranks of the Company. Captain Hobbs had done much during his tenure of command, not only from the point of view of work, but also for the welfare of all ranks, and he was universally liked.

He was succeeded in command by Captain C. J. Olliffe, 13th Frontier Force Rifles, who did not stay long before being admitted to hospital.

The Jodhpur Sardar Infantry returned from overseas at about that time, so Captain Raiwat Singh, on return from war leave, was transferred from the battalion to the Jodhpur Demonstration Company in command. Captain Raiwat Singh had served with the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry throughout the war in Eritrea, Egypt, North Africa, and Italy. He was student at the Indian Military Academy on the outbreak of war, so that he had the necessary experience.

Early in February, 1946, with the return to India of most of the Indian Army formations from overseas, it was decided that a Company of the 4th Gurkha Rifles should relieve the Jodhpur Demonstration Company, which would return to the State.

In this connection, the following letter was received by His Highness from the Commandant, Indian Military Academy:—

“Dear Maharaja Sahib,

I am writing to Your Highness on the occasion of the departure on the 15th February, 1946, of the Jodhpur Demonstration Company from the Indian Military Academy. The I.M.A. is indeed grateful not only to the company itself for the hard and valuable work they have done here but also to you for allowing them to remain here so long. Their work has been outstanding for its keenness and unfailing good humour on the many schemes and demonstrations they have done for and with the cadets, and the I.M.A. will not readily forget them. I should like especially to mention Captain Raiwat Singh who commanded the company during their last six months and whose sense of duty and enthusiasm have been of such value as an example to the cadets.

Please accept on behalf of the staff and the cadets of the Indian Military Academy my very sincerely grateful thanks.

Yours sincerely,

A. B. Barltrop”.

A handsome shield was presented by the Indian Military Academy to the company in memory of the time it had been employed there, and a farewell party was given in the officers Mess, to which all V.C.Os and N.C.Os were invited.

On February 15th, 1946, the Jodhpur Demonstration Company left Dehra Dun. Many officers were present at the station to bid farewell to the company, which had carried out its work so well and had been immensely popular. Tea and sweets were provided for the men, and the band of the Indian Military Academy played incidental music until the train left the station.

CHAPTER IX.

The Jodhpur Bodyguard.

IT was in February 1941 when His Highness was informed that His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief had selected the Jodhpur Lancers for mechanisation, the entire cost of 28 lakhs of rupees to be borne by the Government of India. This news was entirely unexpected, and it was, of course, realised that a signal honour had been done to the regiment and the State in that it was the first Indian State regiment to be selected for mechanisation.

However, although it meant that the regiment would be put on a modern basis, and would have more chance of being sent on active service overseas, there was, undoubtedly, some feeling of sadness that it would lose its much-loved horses. Horse-riding, polo, pigsticking, tent-pegging, jumping, in fact all forms of sport to do with the horse, form a large part of the life of the Rajput of Jodhpur State. The love of the Rajputana Rajput for his horse was an accepted fact. The horses of the Jodhpur Lancers were the property of the State, and the regiment had always had the name of being one of the best mounted cavalry units in India. All the horses of the regiment were Australians, and, in pre-war years, every winter an officer, accompanied by a veterinary officer, would go to Bombay to select and buy 70 or 80 remounts from Mr. Bob Gove, from several thousand young horses, which had arrived by ship from Australia.

So it was a matter of great concern not only to His Highness and the officers of the regiment,

but to many others in the State, that the regimental horses were to go and be replaced by tanks or armoured cars, and it was felt imperative that something should be done to keep a proportion, at any rate, of our horses.

It was then that the idea of a horsed Bodyguard Squadron came into being, and His Highness approved of the proposal with enthusiasm.

Brigadier Duncan went to Delhi to see Brigadier Mackie, the Director of Remounts, G.H.Q., with the object of getting back if possible, some of the regimental horses from Risalpur to Jodhpur for the Bodyguard Squadron, which was about to be raised. Brigadier Mackie received the request most favourably, and not only agreed to the return of 350 horses of the regiment to the State, but was able to arrange that the cost of their transport by rail from Risalpur to Jodhpur should be borne by the Government of India.

A committee of officers of the Jodhpur Lancers selected these horses, and the very best horses in the regiment, including nearly all the horses of the regimental polo ride were sent to Jodhpur.

Of these 350 horses, 200 were for the Jodhpur Bodyguard Squadron, and the remaining 150 horses were sold at a low rate to approved persons in the State with the proviso that they could be recalled at any time, if necessary.

The Jodhpur Bodyguard Squadron was raised by Brigadier R. C. Duncan under the orders of



Major Mangal Singh, the first Officer
Commanding Jodhpur Bodyguard
and now Commandant,
Jodhpur Fort Guard.



Captain Achal Singh,
Officer Commanding, Jodhpur Bodyguard

His Highness in May, 1941 as a State Service Unit.

It consisted of 3 troops of Rajputs, and 1 troop of Kayamkhanies.

Captain Mangal Singh of the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre was appointed Commandant, and Lieut. Achal Singh, Adjutant and Quartermaster. Lieut. Achal Singh had only recently returned from His Excellency the Governor of Bengal's Bodyguard where he had served since 1911 and had been Risaldar. He had officiated in command of the Bengal Bodyguard for the six months previous to his return to Jodhpur, so he had a wide experience of the work and training of a Bodyguard squadron.

The authorised strength of the Jodhpur Bodyguard Squadron was 2 State officers, 4 Indian officers, 125 Indian other ranks, 90 Non-combatants (enrolled), and 180 Horses.

The personnel of the squadron consisted mainly of pensioners or discharged men of the Jodhpur Sardar Rissala with a small proportion of pensioners of the Indian Cavalry regiments, which enlist men from Jodhpur State—The 2nd Royal Lancers, 16th Cavalry, Poona Horse, and 18th K.E.O. Cavalry—so that many of the men of the squadron were veterans of the first World War.

No difficulty was experienced in enlisting a sufficient number of men, and, within three months, the Jodhpur Bodyguard Squadron was up to strength and was superbly mounted.

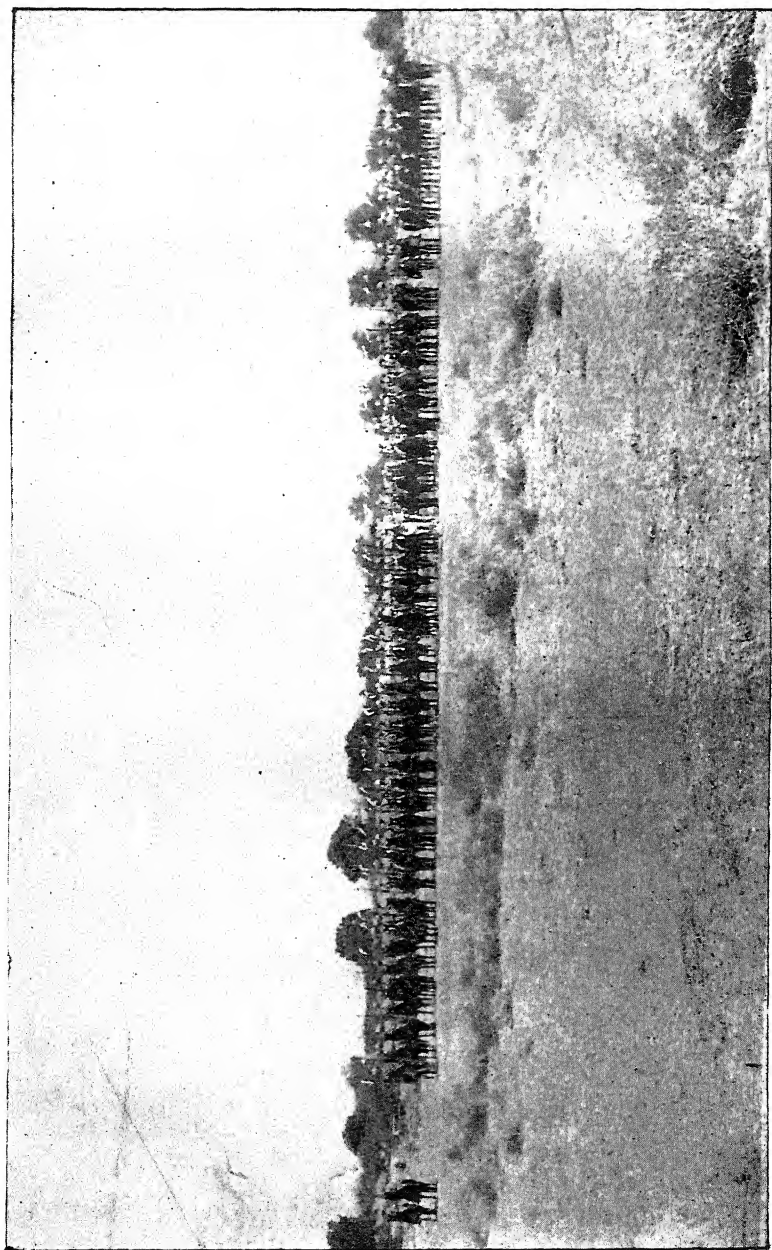
There is always much to arrange and organise and many difficulties to surmount, in a newly raised unit, but Captain Mangal Singh, ably assisted by Lieut. Achal Singh, tackled it splendidly, and within a very short time, the squadron took over Palace Guard duties.

The valuable horses of the Regimental polo ride were carefully looked after and schooled, and were played at polo regularly.

Captain Mangal Singh commanded the Jodhpur Bodyguard Squadron for two and a half years, when he retired on pension and was appointed to command the Fort Guard. He was succeeded in command by Lieut. Achal Singh, who was promoted Captain on November 16th, 1943. Risaldar Ugam Singh, late of the Jodhpur Sardar Rissala, was re-employed and appointed Adjutant and Quartermaster vice Lieut. Achal Singh. It may be of interest to record that Risaldar Ugam Singh won the All India tentpegging at the last Delhi Horse Show in the Spring of 1939, and the large silver challenge cup won by him is now in the Officers Mess of the Jodhpur Lancers at Jodhpur.

Captain Maharaj Prem Singh was transferred from the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre to the Jodhpur Bodyguard Squadron on April 8th, 1945, and was seconded as A.D.C. to His Highness, while Major K. Bishan Singh was appointed an Honorary Officer of the Squadron.

The Jodhpur Bodyguard Squadron has proved itself to be not only an ornamental unit of the Jodhpur State Forces, but also a useful one. It supplies a guard for the Palace, and is often in



THE JODHPUR BODYGUARD.

demand for ceremonial purposes. It was employed on several occasions during local disturbances in the city, where its presence had a most calming effect, and where it carried out its duties most satisfactorily during those rather difficult times.

The designation of the Jodhpur Bodyguard Squadron was altered to the Jodhpur Bodyguard on October 25th, 1945.

Risaldar Baxu Khan was awarded the Order of British India, Second class, with the title of "Bahadur" in the New Year's Honours on January 1st, 1946.

CHAPTER X.

PART I

The Jodhpur Mule Troop.

THE Jodhpur Mule Troop was under the command of Lieut. Nag Singh until March 18th, 1942, when he was transferred to the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry and was succeeded by Captain Chatter Singh, who was transferred from that battalion.

In pre-war years approximately 10 mules were bought annually from the Government of India Remount Department or the Rewa mule depot to replace animals to be cast. This, however, was not possible during the war, as mules were unobtainable. The Mule Troop carries out station duties, and these duties, like others during wartime, increased. However, the mules carried out their work nobly and ungrudgingly, but, by the end of the war, many of them were well over-age and deserved a long rest.

PART II.

The Jodhpur Fort Guard.

THE Jodhpur Fort Guard is composed of pensioners from the Jodhpur Lancers and Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, with a small proportion of men, who had taken their discharge from those units.

It was raised in December, 1935, to take the place of two platoons of the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, which, until then, were stationed there. It is permanently located in the Jodhpur Fort.

On the outbreak of war, it was commanded by Major Umed Singh, late Jodhpur Lancers, with Captain Moti Singh, late Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, as his second-in-command. Major Mangal Singh, late Commandant, Jodhpur Bodyguard Squadron, was appointed Commandant, Fort Guard, on November 16th, 1943, vice Major Umed Singh, and Captain Madan Singh, late 2nd Jodhpur Infantry, was later appointed second in-command.

The Indian Officers of the Fort Guard are—Subedar Moti Singh, I.O.M., I.D.S.M., late Jodhpur Lancers and 2nd Jodhpur Infantry, who was twice decorated for conspicuous gallantry during the last war, and who volunteered for service in the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry immediately on the outbreak of the Second World War and served with the battalion for nearly 5 years, and Jemadar Ganga Ram, M.B.E., late Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, who was

awarded the "M.B.E." for his part in the landing at Salerno, Italy, in September, 1943.

It is a nice, easy, and comfortable life for all ranks of the Fort Guard, who indeed deserve it after having served His Highness for many years loyally and well.

PART III.

The Jodhpur Military Hospital.

I feel that the Jodhpur Military Hospital should not be left out of this history of the Jodhpur State Forces in the Second World War, for it undoubtedly played its part. The large expansion of the State Forces resulted in a tremendous amount of extra work being thrown on the Medical Officer in charge and the Hospital Staff.

Lieut. P.R. Badve was Medical Officer in charge of the Military Hospital on the outbreak of war. He remained in charge throughout the war, and was, on October 16th, 1941, promoted Captain. All through those years of war, he never spared himself and he set a splendid example to all those under him of selfless devotion to work.

Until 1936, the Military Hospital had been purely a military institution under the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces. This did not appear to be an entirely satisfactory state of affairs, as the hospital lacked specialists and many appliances and equipment, which were available at the Windham Hospital, one of the best equipped hospitals in Northern India. Accordingly, Dr. E. W. Hayward (later Colonel E.W. Hayward, R.A.M.C.) and Brigadier Duncan changed the organisation of the Military Hospital, so that from a medical and administrative point of view, it came under the Principal Medical Officer whilst the Medical Officer in charge and some of the permanent staff came under the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, from

a disciplinary point of view. From then, all serious cases of illness or injury among the troops were transferred to the Windham Hospital for treatment. The reorganisation has proved to be a success from every point of view.

Before the outbreak of war, the average intake of recruits for the Jodhpur State Forces was about 120 annually. During the years of war well over 7,000 recruits were enlisted for the Jodhpur State Forces! Of three boys, who presented themselves at the Headquarters office for enlistment, at least one was found to be medically unfit, so that it is no exaggeration to say that about 10,000 men or boys were considered fit for enlistment and had, therefore, to be medically examined by the Medical Officer in charge of the Military Hospital, who rejected about 3,000 of them. It can be readily understood that this medical examination of recruits in itself meant a tremendous amount of extra work to the Medical Officer.

Every draft for our units serving outside the State, and there were many, had to be medically examined and inoculated for protection against various diseases, before departure.

The strength of the Jodhpur State Forces before the war was approximately 1,700, whilst, during the war, there was nearly always double that number of troops serving at Jodhpur in the two Training Centres and the State Service units. The mechanisation of the Jodhpur Lancers Training Centre led inevitably to a number of accidents and injuries, which would not have been incurred before the days of mechanisation. The number of patients admitted to the hospital



Major P. R. Badve, Medical Officer
Incharge, Military Hospital,
Jodhpur.



Captain Rai Sahib Shree Krishna
Tripathi, Staff Captain, Headquarters,
Jodhpur State Forces.

and the number of out-patients was, therefore, more than double that during pre-war years.

There was, for nearly a year, a company of Indian Engineers under the command of Major Geoff Evans, R.E., which was accommodated in a large barrack in the military area. The Medical Officer in charge of the Military Hospital not only examined recruits for enlistment in this company, but also admitted to hospital and treated patients from the unit.

It is hoped that this short account of the work of the Jodhpur Military Hospital in the Second World War will give the reader some idea of the very heavy work involved and the great strain put upon Captain P.R. Badve, the Medical Officer in charge, who stood up to it splendidly.

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PART IV.

The Liaison Branch, Headquarters, Jodhpur State Forces.

As the war progressed, the Jodhpur State Forces grew and grew in size, and, by the beginning of 1943, no less than 4 units—the Jodhpur Lancers, the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry, and the Jodhpur Demonstration Company—and the No. 54 (Jodhpur) General Purposes Transport Company, R.I.A.S.C., which was composed entirely of men of Jodhpur State, were serving outside the State, a total, in all, of approximately 3,500 men.

It can be readily understood how these men nearly all of whom had never before been outside the State, thought and worried about their homes and families and how their relatives and dependents, living isolated in their villages in the desert, longed for news of their men, and had many difficulties to contend with during the absence of their menfolk.

His Highness, realising all this, and wishing that as much as possible should be done towards the general welfare of the families and dependents of his soldiers serving outside the State, approved of the creation of a Liaison Branch at Headquarters, Jodhpur State Forces.

Major Shyam Singh, Jodhpur Lancers, was appointed as Chief Liaison Officer on the Staff of the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, and promoted to Lieut.-Colonel from October 1st, 1943. He had under him 3 touring officers,



Lt.-Col. Shyam Singh, Chief Liaison Officer,
Headquarters, Jodhpur State Forces.

Lt.-Colonel Hem Singh, Bahadur O.B.I., late Jodhpur Sardar Rissala, 2nd.-Lieut. Sadul Singh late Jodhpur Sardar Rissala, and Subedar Jeewan Ram, late Jodhpur Sardar Infantry.

The main duties of the Chief Liaison Officer were:—

- (1) To receive all petitions from the men serving outside the State or from their dependents, and to send them for investigation to the State department concerned, and to be responsible that action was taken on them. If no action was taken, or if action was delayed, to take steps to remedy this.
- (2) To attend all local Soldiers' Board meetings in the State.
- (3) To send news letters monthly to all units outside the state, including in these letters, detailed information as regards the tours carried out by the Touring Officers, what villages they had visited and whom they had seen, the state of crops and the prices of grain, and all happenings of interest in the State.
- (4) To investigate all recommendations for grants from the Jodhpur State Forces Benevolent Fund, and submit to the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, his opinion for a grant or otherwise, and also to maintain the accounts of the Fund.

- (5) To arrange for the dispatch of amenities to units serving outside the State.

In general, to look after the interests and welfare of all soldiers of the Jodhpur State Forces serving outside the State, and the welfare of their dependents.

His touring officers in the course of their tours of villages made enquiries regarding the prompt payment of family allotments and separation allowance, whether letters were being received and sent, whether there were any troubles and, if so, they endeavoured to help. In general, their duty was to render all possible help to the relatives of our soldiers, and to report to the Chief Liaison Officer the results of their tours.

Lt.-Colonel Shyam Singh carried out his duties of Chief Liaison Officer most conscientiously and well. He organised the Branch from the start and put it on a really sound working basis. He had the interests of our soldiers and their dependents very much at heart, and there is no doubt that the work of the Liaison Branch was of immense benefit to the troops of the Jodhpur State Forces and their dependents during the war.

CHAPTER XI

No. 54 (Jodhpur) Company, R. I. A. S. C., (General Transport) 1940—1945.

By

Lt.Colonel A.J.B. SINKER, R.I.A.S.C.

PART I.

Conception.

ON the fall of France in May 1940, the situation facing G.H.Q. India was a serious one. Plans for expanding the Indian Army had been prepared, but it was obvious that these plans would have to be speeded up to the greatest possible extent. The lessons of the early campaigns in Europe were quickly absorbed and it was realised that the new Army would have to mechanise at a much greater pace than was previously envisaged.

Much had already been done in expanding the M.T. side of the R.I.A.S.C., but it was a slow process. At the outbreak of war there had been the equivalent of only about forty M.T. Sections in the R.I.A.S.C. and it was now obvious that many hundreds would be required in the near future if the new Army was to be able to compete with that of the enemy in mobility. The plan of periodically 'milking' one unit to form the nucleus of a second was no longer adequate.

A suggestion was therefore made that a number of M.T. Companies might be quickly

formed from the military and police personnel of Indian States, who after having been enrolled in the Indian Army, would only have to be welded in to the new units and taught M.T. work before being able to take their place as fully trained units ready for active service in any part of the world. The scheme was an ambitious one and bristled with difficulties, but the situation was serious and warranted unusual methods.

The Rulers of the Indian States were, therefore, approached and some of them agreed to co-operate, although the scheme had not been worked out in detail and many points needed early clarification. These matters were left to be worked out in individual States as the units started to form by those most concerned, the Officers Commanding the new Companies and the appropriate State authorities. This arrangement was not an ideal one, but speed was essential, and it was the only way to avoid delay. Moreover, one advantage did arise from this procedure, for it enabled each unit to develop its own individual personality. One of the earliest acceptances of this scheme came from the Ruler of Jodhpur State.

PART II.

*Birth and Early Days in Jodhpur-Winter
1940-41—Baluchistan, Spring 1941.*

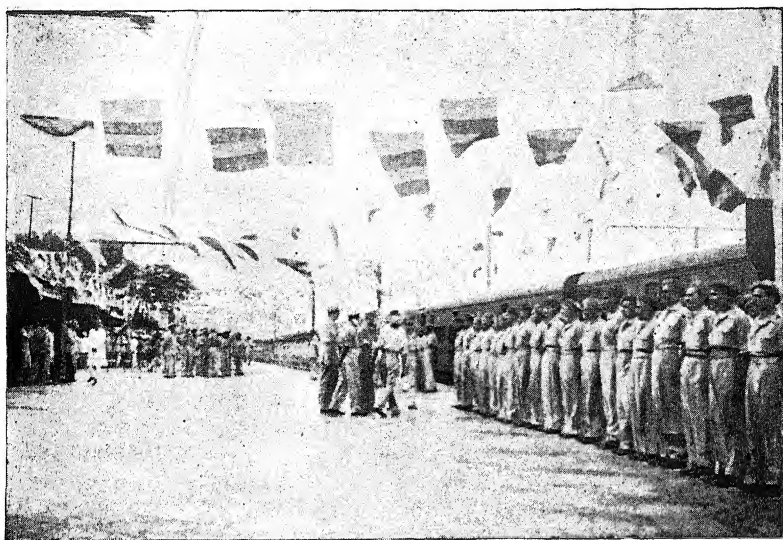
MAJOR A.J.B. Sinker, who had been working in G.H.Q. for the previous five months on problems connected with M.T. expansion, was selected to raise and command the new Company, which was to be formed in Jodhpur. It was given the title of 54 (Jodhpur) General Purposes Transport Company, R.I.A.S.C. Major Sinker arrived in Jodhpur on October 10th, 1940, which became the official date of the birth of the new unit. His Staff consisted of Jemadar Bidhi Chand, I.W.O. Hoshiar Singh, two 'Q' N.C.Os, and two Civilian R.I.A.S.C. Clerks. This was all the personnel that could be spared to raise and train for active service an M.T. unit of nearly 500 strong. It was a big undertaking.

The first few days were spent by the new O.C., in discussions and conferences with Brigadier R.C. Duncan, M.V.O., O.B.E., (now Major General), Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, and other State officials. Without their whole-hearted support, and especially that of Brigadier Duncan, the ultimate success of the unit could never have been assured. It was early apparent that the numbers required by the new unit could not possibly be found from military and police personnel of the State. It was agreed, therefore, that a nucleus of State enrolled personnel should be provided and that the balance should be made up by Jodhpur domiciled recruits selected by the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces. A few Indian Army pensioners and discharges were also enrolled.

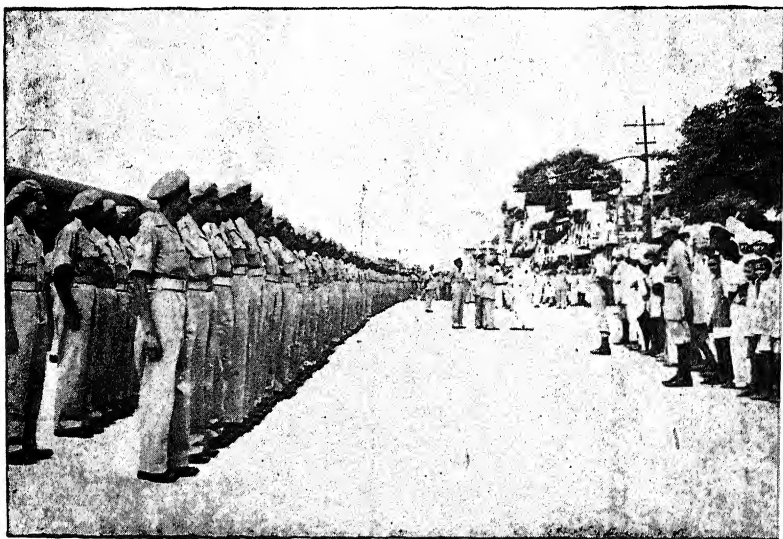
It was arranged by the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, for these recruits to do their initial military training with the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry, after which they were taken over by Major Sinker and his staff for their M.T. training, and for welding into the new unit. This arrangement proved a complete success, and the unit owes a great debt of gratitude to Lt.-Colonel Heer Singh and his staff for their whole-hearted co-operation in this initial recruit military training. Lt.-Colonel Rao Raja Sujan Singh, commanding the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, also took great interest in the unit, and, although he knew that his own unit might shortly proceed on active service, recommended some of his best young L/Naiks and senior sepoy for transfer to the new unit as N.C.Os, and those young N.C.Os early proved their worth.

There was no dearth of recruits and the unit began steadily to fill up. Recruits were formed into squads of 50 for their M.T. training, but this training had to be "staggered" owing to the limited numbers of vehicles and driving instructors available. A contract was entered into for the supply of vehicles and civilian instructors with a Jodhpur contractor, Shivram Singh of Sainik Brothers, and both instructors and vehicles, after the necessary settling down process, proved very satisfactory. The city of Jodhpur and its surroundings was an ideal locality, and a maidan, quiet roads, city roads, hill roads, and cross country driving areas, were soon found that would rival the training facilities in and around any Indian cantonment.

Lieut. Mod Singh of the Jodhpur Lancers and Sub-Inspector Sultan Singh, B.A., LL.B., of



Arrival of No. 54 (Jodhpur) General Purposes Transport Company,
R. I. A. S. C., at Jodhpur Railway Station on return from service overseas.



Arrival of No. 54 (Jodhpur) General Purposes Transport Company,
R. I. A. S. C. at Jodhpur Railway Station on return from service overseas.

the Jodhpur Police, and Cadet Chand Singh were selected by the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, as officers for the new unit. The first two joined immediately and entered enthusiastically into their new duties. Chand Singh spent the next year training in India and joined the unit in Iraq in November, 1941. The success of the unit during its war service was largely due to the enthusiasm, loyalty, and efficiency of these three Rajput officers, who provided a solid background against the many changes of command.

Training went on apace during the cold weather of 1940-41, and it was soon found that even if the Marwari had never before seen a mechanical contrivance such as a lorry or car he could be trained into a first class military driver. Except for an unfortunate accident when a lorry full of civilian instructor drivers, and driven by another civilian, ran over and killed Census Superintendent, Panna Lal, not a single serious accident occurred involving death or injury to a civilian, or serious injury to an enlisted man. It is doubtful whether a single British or Indian training unit of this, or any other period, could show such a record. The training was severe, especially the hill and cross country driving, but the men took it all in their stride and almost without exception developed into safe and efficient drivers.

Hours were long during this period and all worked at high pressure but progress was steady and keenness and morale were kept at a high level. More and more squads were passing on to the post recruit training stage where they came under the direction of 2nd.-Lieut. Harvey-James,

the new unit's indefatigable second-in-command, who had arrived in Jodhpur on January 1st, 1941.

The local inhabitants of Jodhpur will long remember the endless procession of lorries of all shapes and sizes, with a large "L" in front and rear, working up and down their busy streets and occasionally holding up traffic at busy intersection points, but there was mutual understanding and sympathy on both sides and the intensive training proceeded, therefore, in an atmosphere of interest and friendship.

It was hoped that the unit would stay on in Jodhpur till the end of April, when the last squads would have completed their recruit M.T. training, but this was not to be, for the need for M.T. units was too great. Orders were received at very short notice that the unit was to proceed to Baluchistan in the middle of March where they would be called upon to do normal M.T. duties immediately. No civilian M.T. instructors were to be taken.

The unit's farewell to Jodhpur was an inter-section hill driving competition at Lalsagar, to which His Highness, Brigadier R.C. Duncan, and a large party of Indian and British Officials and their wives were invited. It was a great success. The course was a severe one and each section had to take a convoy of four lorries over the course. Points were given for control, speed, and safe driving. 2nd.-Lieut. Sultan Singh's Rajput section was the winner in a close competition, and His Highness gave away the challenge shield, which he himself had presented, to the winning team. The unit's new undress uniform of Jodhpur style dress with brightly coloured

turbans of different section colours was seen for the first time, and it was easy to see and feel during the afternoon that the unit was already developing a fine morale and esprit-de-corps. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that in spite of its youth and inexperience the unit would acquit itself well in whatever role it was employed in the future. Frequent comments were heard during the afternoon by owner-drivers of many years standing that they would have considered the course impossible even to fully trained drivers with new and up-to-date vehicles, and they were quite speechless when they saw newly trained recruits taking bazar "crocks" over the course without a single hitch of any kind.

The Company arrived in Loralai during the third week of March 1941 and thereupon began the most difficult period of its history. The unit had only three officers, Major Sinker, Captain Harvey-James, and Captain Mod Singh, for Captain Sultan Singh was at the R.I.A.S.C. School, Kakul, on a three months' course. There were no army trained M.T. Instructors in the unit, no civilian instructors could be employed, and there were 200 men in the unit who had not yet completed their recruit training. At the same time, the unit had to be used as a fully trained M.T. unit carrying troops and stores over dangerous hill roads, for this was the time the defences throughout N. W. India were being modernised so as to be capable of repelling a modern mechanised army.

The hundred or so best drivers of the unit were heavily overworked during this period and right well they responded. They were needed

for the periodic drawing of new vehicles from Quetta, a round trip of 320 miles: for the training of recruits who had not completed their M.T. recruit training: for the carrying of the unit's first 'live loads' from the Harnai railhead over the dangerous Harnai—Loralai road, which has frequently been described as 'one of the most dangerous hill roads in India.' They never faltered and as they drove hundreds of miles a week, their experience and reliability rapidly increased and the numbers of 'safe' drivers continually grew—and more and more important duties came to be given to the unit by the Brigade and District authorities as they realised its capabilities. Trainee drivers also had to be used on urgent load carrying duties and much of their final recruit training was carried out while carrying stores to and from Killa Saifulla, the railhead for Loralai, a round trip of 94 miles.

During this period the Company received its first official commendation. A convoy of the unit, consisting of 44 lorries carrying the main body of a Mahratta Battalion, was approaching Spinatiza Camp, near the boundary of Baluchistan and Afghanistan, when a freak storm broke. Dry river beds quickly became torrents and several had to be negotiated nearly two feet in depth. Over the last six miles the route lay up a river bed which was normally dry. It was now running in spate and in places was nearly three feet deep, and it was only by super-human efforts that every vehicle of the convoy reached camp. Many vehicles had to be manhandled through the worst places for the few tow ropes with the column soon became unserviceable. It was a fine prelude to active

service and the men behaved like seasoned troops in entirely unexpected and extremely difficult conditions. The unit received a written appreciation from the C.O. of the Mahrattas, which was a regular battalion, soon after the last lorry arrived in camp just after dark, in which the concluding sentence was "My Officers and N.C.Os are full of their praises: I hope we shall be lucky enough to have your Company with us on service when the time comes." That was full praise from the C.O. of a regular battalion to a newly raised unit only a few months old, and gave tremendous encouragement to all ranks.

Collective training was not forgotten during this period, although it was not easy to fit in amongst the multifarious duties that the unit had to perform. From time to time sections were struck off other duties for a day or two at a time and practised in harbour drill, camouflage and concealment, night driving without lights and defensive positions, etc. Aided by its high morale, lessons were soon learned and all ranks looked forward confidently to early mobilization for active service.

During the last days of April 1941, the unit was specially selected to send an important convoy to Jiwani, the Imperial Airways Flying Boat base near the entrance to the Persian Gulf. This entailed a round trip of nearly 1500 miles through a sparsely populated area and over practically an unknown route. The conditions of the journey were akin to active service and the route was at times fully as difficult as the Lalsagar hill driving tracks, but the vehicles were now hundreds of miles from workshop attention.

There were 25 vehicles in the convoy. An average of 12 miles in the hour driving time was achieved, and the petrol consumption was very satisfactory. This showed that the standard of driving was high. Six days were spent on the journey, followed by three days' rest and maintenance at Jiwani, and the full convoy arrived back in Quetta on the fifteenth day with every vehicle a runner. This result speaks for itself on the efficiency of Captain Harvey-Jaines and his party.

Two days after the Jiwani convoy left Quetta, the Company received the orders that it had been hoping for—'Mobilize for active service overseas.'

PART III.

The Persian War—August, 1941: Across the Desert to Palestine—October—November, 1941: Iraq and Persia—1942—43: Aid to Russia Convoys—January—March, 1944.

THE unit arrived in Basra, Iraq, towards the end of July 1941. It had been on short notice to leave India from May 31st, by which time the 300 men it had been able to send on 15 days overseas leave had rejoined. The extra few weeks in India had been most useful as it enabled the final two squads to complete their recruit M.T. training, so by the time the unit left India, all personnel had completed at least this portion of their training. The unit was also up to strength in officers, for Captain Sultan Singh had arrived from Kakul together with two new officers just posted, 2nd.-Lieuts. Howie and Woolmer.

The heat was intense when the unit landed and two officers, one Rajput and one British, immediately proceeded to hospital, where their disease was in danger of being diagnosed as J.C.T.I. (a new disease prevalent in the Iraq Force during the summer months which the doctors say stands for "Just can't take it"!). The men however stood the heat well, in spite of living in tents in the open desert, as they found it very like their own climate in Rajputana.

Major Sinker left the unit temporarily soon after arrival in Iraq and joined the Advanced Echelon Force H.Q., which was working out the operations soon to be carried out in S.W. Persia,

For this operation the unit was selected as the M.T. Company in Force Reserve.

The operations started on August 25th by lightning thrusts on Abadan, Kurramshah, and the oil field areas further north. It was one of the earliest combined operations, for the Royal Navy, the R.A.F., and the Army all took part, and was a brilliant success. The whole Persian Navy, consisting of seven gun boats anchored at the junction of the Shatt-al-Arab and Karun rivers, was sunk or captured in a 10 minutes engagement, and the Persian Admiral-in-Command was killed leading a gallant but forlorn infantry charge on land. The operations concluded on August 28th with the capture of Ahwaz, an important railway town on the Karun, 80 miles upstream from its junction with the Shatt-al-Arab.

The unit had been very fully employed during the operations as 3rd line transport, the essential link between the formation transport units of the infantry brigades and Divisional troops, and the Supply, P.O.L., and ammunition dumps at Tanuma, on the North side of the river from Basra. The unit had one casualty, Naik Magni Ram, who asked permission to report sick 24 hours after he had been hit! He received the 1939-43 Star and two months leave in his home so considered his wound was well worth while!

Captain Sultan Singh and his Section had an exciting experience during the quickly moving four days' war. He was up with the fighting troops at the time as he and his Section had been allotted to a Baluch Regiment to

enable them to be employed as embussed Infantry. The battalion had succeeded in capturing 500 Persian troops, including about a dozen Persian officers. Late at night, 80 miles out in the desert from the North bank of the Shatt-al-Arab, Captain Sultan Singh was ordered to take charge of the prisoners and hand them over to the P.O.W. cage at Tanuma. No escort could be given to him, for the battalion was due to attack Ahwaz the next morning, and he and his 80 men were unarmed except for his personal revolver—that he had never fired. Making a rapid appreciation he packed all the officers into his 15 cwt. truck and sat amongst them himself with his loaded pistol ready for action, leaving his V. C. O., Jemadar Inder Singh, to guide the column, reached Tanuma and the prisoners were safely handed over, but history does not relate whether Jemadar Inder Singh used navigational methods or just natural intuition to find his way! The fact remains however that several similar columns from other units that travelled through the night with prisoners were lost in the desert for several days.

Soon after the conclusion of the Persian War the Persian and Iraq command was asked to provide 'a really good M.T. Company' to take part in a long and important convoy occupying about 6 weeks. The Company was successful in obtaining this nomination after its good work in the Persian war. The nature of the duty was kept very secret at the time, of course, but turned out to be transporting the 10th Indian Infantry Brigade, commanded by Brigadier Rees, (later Major General Rees, commanding the famous 'Dagger Division' in Burma and hero of the recapture of Mandalay)

of the 5th Indian Division back to the Middle East. This formation had been brought over to Iraq as a reserve before the start of the Persian War.

Major Sinker, after having taken part in the selection of the unit for this interesting and important role, was able to give up his staff appointment and rejoin the unit 24 hours before they left Basra. The first portion of the journey was a 6 days' run up to the oil areas of North Iraq, carrying a prewar regular unit. It was carried out without incident, but Sultan found that he had a most useful name for a Mohamedan Country like Iraq, and he obtained even better results by calling himself Sultan Baid! The Company had a 5 days' halt at Kirkuk, the starting point of the Trans Desert Oil Pipe Line to Haifa, where some enthusiasts obtained excellent sand grouse shooting, while Mod learnt from a new Gurkha acquaintance how to catch fish with a service rifle!

The unit left Kirkuk in two flights one day apart on the long journey to Palestine. The formation they were carrying had been on active service for more than 12 months and had fought through many campaigns, and had lived in nine different countries during their time overseas, so the Company was on its mettle from the first. Harvey James and Woolmer with the Kaimkhanies were with a Scottish Regiment and learnt to do everything—well, nearly everything—to the strains of the bag pipes: Sultan and his Rajputs were with the Garhwalis, whom he still persisted in calling Gurkhas: Howie and the Jats were with a big hospital unit, so generally succeeded in getting the best of things:

Mod's section was split up throughout the second flight. Before starting out across the Syrian Desert the unit spent two days resting and maintaining their vehicles on the shores of Lake Habbaniya where they enjoyed excellent bathing.

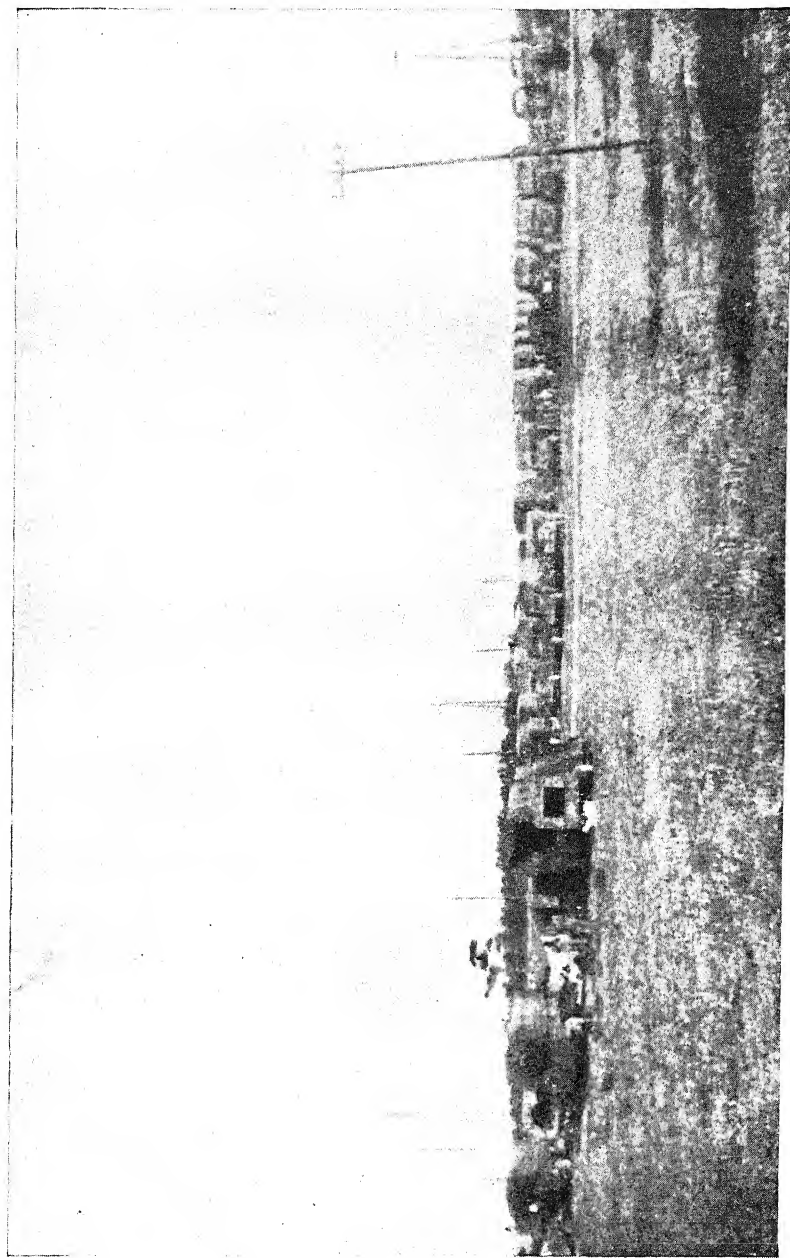
Before leaving Baghdad the Company had been commissioned to prepare a route diagram from Baghdad to Haifa, as little was known of portions of this route at the time. On their return to Baghdad the finished product was handed in. All officers of the unit had assisted in its preparation. It was immediately issued by the Persia and Iraq Command and was in general use as the official guide for all convoys using the route for the next 12 months until it became out-of-date. The unit received official commendation for this report.

The desert portion of the journey was much more interesting than everyone expected. Over part of the route there was a metalled road and telegraph line but for over 200 miles there was at this time nothing but desert tracks, the road not being completed until a year later. But the scenery was seldom dull for a desert has almost as many changes of scenery as any other type of country, except in colour. On some of the marches, different desert formations were practised and the convoys were travelling generally at faster speeds than the Marwaris had been accustomed to, for the stages were long and the convoys were many miles in length and the plan was normally to reach camp before dark. There were very few accidents, all of them minor, and the worst occurred on a night march when a certain gallant officer, mistaking water for a

patch of light coloured sand, and obviously not being a specialist in navigation, led his column at a steady 15 m.p.h. straight into Lake Habbaniya that he imagined was two hours journey behind him !

Palestine was a revelation to everyone. After days of desert scenery and easy driving, providing one kept awake—the men suddenly saw cultivation, green fields and steep winding hill roads as they descended to the Jordan Valley. After a long day's run through typically Mediterranean scenery on narrow but first class roads with much fast moving traffic they arrived at Beit Lyd, just South of Haifa and 4 miles from the coast. Unfortunately this was the end of their journey and they handed over their charges to an R.A.S.C. Tpt. Coy., who next day carried them into Egypt. Had the Company transferred their charges one day later, in Egypt, all personnel would have been entitled to wear the African Star.

Five days were spent in Palestine, maintaining vehicles, sea bathing, visiting places of interest and collecting loads from various points for the return journey to Iraq. Many of these loads consisted of grape fruit, as the Company carried nearly one thousand cases for the troops in Iraq and Persia. Luckily the Marwari had not yet acquired a taste for this fruit so all loads arrived intact ! On October 17, 1941, the Company celebrated its first birthday, as that was the day the first recruits had been enrolled in Jodhpur. They found themselves in Haifa, the scene of the gallant charge of the Jodhpur Lancers in the last Great War, where Colonel Thakur Dalpat Singh (Deoli) fell at the head of his men whilst charging the Turkish fort—perhaps a



The Company halted somewhere in Palestine.

feat unique in military history of a defended fort being captured by a cavalry charge. Although no trace of the fort now remains many men of the unit paid a visit to the site.

The return journey was more or less uneventful. On arrival in Baghdad the unit was inspected by General Hodgen, the D.S.T. from General Headquarters, India, who was most appreciative.

The Company reached Basra, their starting point, exactly six weeks after leaving it, feeling that they were rapidly becoming a seasoned unit. They had travelled 2500 miles during this period, or an average of 60 miles a day, or nearly 3 lakhs vehicle miles. Except for a slight mishap at Habbaniya, when a vehicle caught fire and one man was admitted to hospital and his vehicle evacuated, no man or vehicle was left behind through either accident or sickness. It is true that Mod left one of his vehicles in an Australian workshop in Palestine, but he managed to obtain a certificate from the W.O. in charge that its condition was due to fair wear and tear; nor has it ever been substantiated that this cost him a bottle of whisky, or assa ! All that is known is that he regularly carried a stock of such liquid 'currency' for any kind of emergency. This freedom from accident and sickness was a record of which the unit was immensely proud and it was a great tribute to all ranks.

Soon after the return of the unit to Basra, which was followed by a long period of Base duties, the first officer 'team' had to break up. Harvey James, the tireless second-in-command went to the 8th Indian Division as a captain; Howie, who had become a great

favourite with the Jats, transferred to the Transportation Directorate, and soon reached the rank of Captain; and in December, Major Sinker finally left the unit to take up a Staff appointment on H.Q. Iraq L of C Area, where he was responsible for all the M.T. units operating at the Base. As the Company operated in the Base for some time he still saw much of them. Later, Woolmer left after completing just one year in the unit and shortly became a Major, commanding the first Tank Transport Company of the R.I.A.S.C. in Iraq.

On the departure of Major Sinker, Major Harvey James was recalled from the 8th Indian Division to take over command, but he only stayed for a few months before being selected to command an experimental Camel Company, R.I.A.S.C., being formed at the Base. He made a great success of this unit which he commanded for nearly two years before being recalled to India. It has never been confirmed, however, that he was once heard to murmur, albeit in his cups, that camels were easier to command than Marwaris! He kept open house at his wonderful underground desert home to all his old friends in the company. Major Arbuthnot and Major Brooks commanded for short periods until Major Fowler took over command in November 1942.

2nd.-Lieut. Chand Singh had arrived in Basra in November after a years' training in India and he was so keen to join the unit, and Major Sinker was so keen to have him, that red tape was ignored and he joined direct after a telephone conversation with a junior officer at the Rest Camp. This later developed into his

being reported as 'absent without leave' from the Rest Camp ! Jemadar Magh Singh, late a Lance Naik in the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, left soon after for India to be trained for a commission; his death in March 1944, together with three men of his platoon, in the only serious accident involving death during the history of the unit, was a deep sorrow and loss to all ranks. Jemadar Taju Khan also left for India for the same purpose, but on arrival found that there was a ban on V.C.Os of the R.I.A.S.C. receiving E.C.O's commissions, a great disappointment to both him and the unit. The two grand old men, Subedars Inder Singh and Rawat Khan, the first from the Jodhpur Lancers and the second from the Indian Army and Jodhpur Police, were with the unit throughout this period, and in spite of collecting a few more white hairs a piece in their moustaches remained as upright and energetic as ever. Two Havildars obtained commissions as V.C.Os, Dhonkal Khan and Hanuman Singh. The former, late of the Indian Army and Jodhpur Police, was one of the first recruits to join the unit, and, although, a Kayamkhani, was made Indian adjutant, where he proved a tremendous success and retained this vital appointment throughout the rest of the period overseas, and is still acting in this capacity.

During 1942 the unit was inspected by General Gwatkin, Military Adviser-in-Chief, Indian States Forces, who last saw them in a very raw stage at Jodhpur; General Selby from General Headquarters, M.E.F., General Lochner, the Area Commander, and the Army Minister of Bikaner. Many Jodhpur friends were also met from time to time,—Colonel Hayward,

Lt.-Colonels Philips, and Lejeune, and Majors Wotherspoon and Henry. Great interest was shown by every one in the Jodhpur eagle which is the unit sign and was painted on the front and back of every vehicle; this has proved quite a factor in the growth of the unit's morale.

Many of the duties carried out during this period were of a monotonous nature but there were relieving features. At one time the unit took part in the operation of M.T. 'trains' organised by Major Sinker in clearing the Basra docks at a critical period of congestion; at another time they were used to ferry large convoys of vehicles of all types from 10-Ton Diesel trucks to bren carriers and midget cars, thereby obtaining valuable experience in all-round driving; at another time Captain Mod Singh joined a driving school for Iraqis and taught numbers of both them and Madras Pioneers to drive, but he was too tactful ever to say whom he thought the most difficult person to teach to drive, a Marwari, an Iraqi, or a Madrassi.

By the time the winter of 1942-43 set in the camp near the village of Zubair, just 15 miles from Basra, where Sindbad the Sailor is supposed to have set out on his travels, was comfortable and weather proof. Exactly a year before, while encamped just outside Colonel Hayward's hospital at Margil, Basra, all had awoken one morning to find nearly 6 inches of water in the tents. But by this time all ranks were rapidly developing into 'old soldiers', capable of making themselves comfortable in any condition of climate and location. Tents were dug down into the ground and suitably drained; they were cool in summer and warm

in winter, and experiments were even proceeding in such luxuries as central heating; this was done by burying a 4-inch steel pipe below the surface of the ground underneath the tent and connecting it to a crude oil flash pan burner outside one side of the tent and a tall fine built of empty petrol tins on the other. This was quite effective but the heat was difficult to regulate which proved awkward in the middle of the night or when a tent was left unoccupied !

The long period of inaction came to an end in February 1943 when the unit moved up to Kirkuk once more and carried out intensive training with the 56th London Division and the 8th Indian Division, which was later to win such renown in the Italian war theatre. After this training two sections with Sultan and Chand, carried the London Irish Regiment from Baghdad to Kabreit, west of the Suez Canal, so had a second opportunity of seeing Palestine. During this time a small party of Marwaris were cut off from the rest of the unit and unable to procure Indian rations. They much enjoyed the food given them by their English friends but did not disclose the exact nature of that food when they rejoined their unit ! The whole trip of nearly 2500 miles was carried out without a single accident, to the surprise as well as delight of the British Troops. The tarmac road across the Syrian desert was now complete so the journey was more uninteresting than before. Between Gaza and Ismalia the road passes through the Sinai desert where a large force of coolies has to be employed to keep the sand from the road which would otherwise be obliterated in a very short while. On arrival in the canal area a great re-union was celebrated with the

Jodhpur Sardar Infantry that the unit had last met in Spinatiza camp, Baluchistan, where they had been together for a few hours only. On return to Baghdad, Sultan found himself detailed for a most unusual duty, the carrying of hundreds of Polish evacuee children to Palestine. Many friendships were made with the children and some of the Marwaris still receive letters from these homeless children, which perhaps brings home to them, as nothing else could, the tragedy of Europe.

In June 1943, the unit was ordered to provide the necessary transport for a large camp which was being opened in Kurdistan in North Iraq. This necessitated a run of 137 miles through hilly country reminiscent of Baluchistan. This duty was performed for six months in all weathers without a single major accident or a single man being injured. During this time the unit received a very welcome visit from Brigadier (now Major General) R.C. Duncan, who was on his way back by air from visiting the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry in North Africa, and who had received excellent reports on the work of the unit from Paiforce H.Q. The Brigadier only remained for one day but all ranks enjoyed this link with their homes in Jodhpur.

At the end of 1943 it was decided to re-equip the unit with new vehicles. They were still in possession of the vehicles issued in Quetta during the early months of 1941. The average mileage of these vehicles was 60,000 and this mileage included recruit training, the trip to Jiwani from Quetta, the Persian operations and several long treks across the Syrian Desert. The Company was immensely proud of these



Major General Duncan being received at Kirkuk Railway Station, Iraq,

vehicles and it was a sad moment when they had to be handed over to units remaining in Iraq, for there was much life still left in them. But the sorrow at losing their own vehicles was tempered by a commendation received from Paiforce H.Q. in which the maintenance of these vehicles was classified as 'excellent'. No unit in Paiforce had kept its vehicles for such a long period, and many units, with no more severe work than station duties to their credit, had had to be re-equipped two or even three times. The new vehicles were four-wheel 3-Tonners, the only vehicles of this type in Paiforce.

In December 1943, just after taking over the new vehicles, a spate swept through the camp occupied by a portion of the unit at 0200 hours one dark night, rising to a height of over 5 feet in places. The C.O. and second-in-command were absent at the time and Sultan took charge of rescue operations. In spite of the dangerous and pitted nature of the ground he was able, by his energy and initiative, to prevent loss of life and to limit loss of equipment, stores, and personal effects to a minimum. Incidentally, Sultan was a non-swimmer, in spite of the determined efforts of Mr. Cox at the Rajput School, Chopasni, and never before did Sultan realise how vital is the elementary knowledge of swimming. He and his men were later complimented on their good work by the Brigade and Divisional Commanders.

After receiving their new vehicles the unit was sent to join an L of C Transport column operating on a many hundred mile route delivering war supplies of all kinds to Russia. The unit only operated these "Aid to Russia"

convoys for three months but the work was perhaps the most interesting it had ever undertaken. The driving conditions and the climate were certainly the most severe the unit had yet encountered.

The route over which the convoys travelled was nearly 700 miles in length and, for most of the distance, passed through mountainous country and included a number of passes, the highest nearly 8000 feet. When operations started, the road had a rough gravel surface for almost its entire length, but the work of laying a bitumen surface proceeded gradually until approximately half of the route was completed. Although local labour was employed to keep the gravel surfaces in repair they were so badly corrugated that there was always considerable wear and tear on vehicles and strain on personnel.

The circumstances in which the convoys operated were peculiar. Starting from Kanaqin, in Central Iraq, and passing through Kermanshah and Hamdan, the first 400 miles of the route lay in Iraq and that part of Persia under British control; the remaining 300 miles, passing through Zenjan, Mianeh, and ending at Tabriz, was occupied by Russian forces. Responsibility for traffic control was divided between the British, American, and Russian armies, for most of the supplies being delivered were of American origin. Each of the three armies controlled a section of the route, and a Highway Traffic Committee, representing all road users, British, American, Russian, and Persian, met once a month. All aspects of road transport operation were discussed—road improvements, warning signs, accident prevention, etc. and the



Climbing the Persian hills on "Aid to Russia" convoy duty.

Committee, provided a valuable means of interchanging ideas and furthering the common effort.

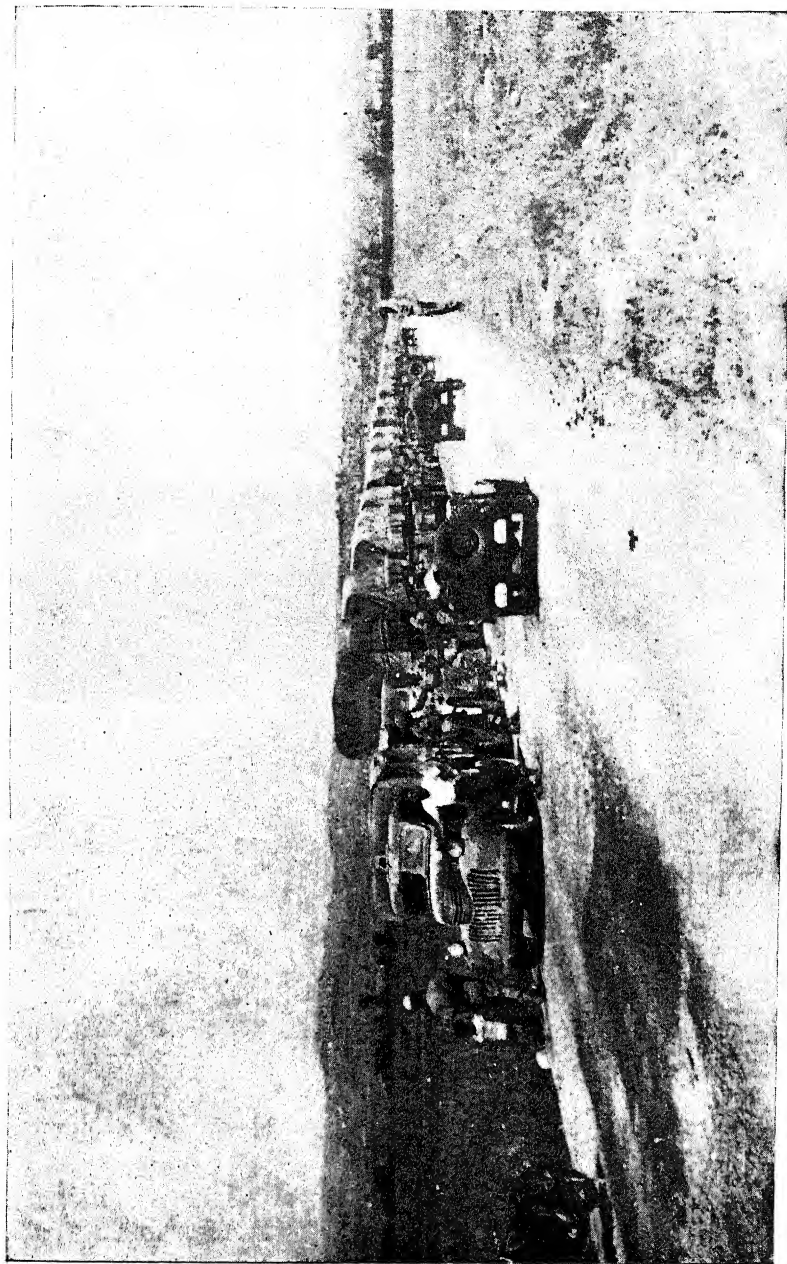
Although the Company was one of the last to join the L of C Transport Column and to operate on this route, and in spite of it being the worst season of the year and for many of the men their first sight of snow and ice at close quarters, they soon made their name as one of the most reliable units on the route. Accidents and sickness were the lowest on record and the unit received commendation on the maintenance and upkeep of its vehicles.

Convoys consisted of one platoon each and were completely self contained. The convoy or platoon commander was therefore the key man, and everything depended on his initiative, resource, and energy, especially in these winter months when often 40° of frost was encountered and the passes were at times blocked by many feet of snow; and dangerous blizzards were frequently met with. The time scheduled for the turn round of 1400 miles was 18 days, but this was often exceeded due to severe weather conditions. The staging posts consisted of huts or converted buildings which were kept properly heated throughout the winter, and a special scale of clothing had, of course, to be issued, which included rubber boots of knee height, sheep skin coats and furlined gloves, and every man was in possession of seven blankets.

Many unusual incidents occurred during this period. On one occasion three vehicles drew up at dusk just outside a camp in the Russian controlled area and the men got out of their

vehicles for a short rest; shots from the guard house were immediately fired at the men as they left their vehicles. One driver, with considerable bravery and great presence of mind, ran into the head lights of the leading vehicle with his hands up, and the firing ceased. The scene ends with a happy party in the guard house, with the Marwaris being entertained to drinks by the Russian women sentries, when the former must have been reminded of the times in ancient Rajput history when their own women were wont to take part in battle. The whole unit, at different times, took part in film 'shots' by British, American, and Russian film companies. These were included in news reels and were shown throughout the world, including Jodhpur. The Jats were so anxious to look their best and to appear clearly in the film as they drove past, that they nearly spoilt their fine record of freedom from accident; one of the Rajput platoons was filmed in Tabriz, whilst performing a Holi dance, dressed in their regimental mufti and bright coloured turbans. Two platoons were once caught in a serious blizzard near Mianeh but after extricating themselves skilfully from a dangerous situation took part in a snow ball fight for the first time in their lives. During this period the head clerk, Subedar Govind Singh Moral, took part in radio recitals from the Baghdad radio station.

The Company had two important visitors at about this time, one just before starting on the "Aid to Russia" convoys and the other just after being taken off this work. The first was His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner, and the second Major General C.O. Harvey, Military



No. 54. (Jodhpur) Company on "Aid to Russia" convoy duty halted outside Tabriz, the Russian railhead.

Adviser-in-Chief, Indian States Forces, under whom the unit had already served in the Persian operations when General Harvey had been General-Officer-Commanding, 8th Indian Division. He was accompanied by His Highness the Maharaja of Jaipur. The Maharaja of Bikaner addressed the whole unit in 'Marwari', exhorting it to keep up the good work it was doing and to maintain the fine Rajput tradition. In the evening, he entertained all the officers to dinner at the Basra Air Port hotel and presented Rs. 500/- for a "burra khana" for the men which was much appreciated by all ranks. During General Harvey's short visit to the unit he showed great interest in its peculiar problems and in its continual efforts to maintain the State identity. On his return to India, he sent a personal letter to His Highness the Maharaja of Jodhpur expressing his appreciation of the excellent work the unit had done during the "Aid to Russia" convoy period, and stating that it had earned splendid reports from the authorities for its efficiency, discipline, and maintenance throughout the past three years.

PART IV.

Italy—1944-45 Home Again—Summer, 1945.

TOWARDS the end of March 1944 work on the "Aid to Russia" convoys ceased, and the unit was sent to Syria on a short period of rest and recuperation. This made the sixth country that they had served in since leaving India in July 1941, the others being Persia, Iraq, Trans-Jordan, Palestine, and Egypt. It was here, just outside Tripoli, that the sad accident occurred in which Lieut. Magh Singh and three of his men met their deaths, that has been briefly referred to in an earlier chapter. This convoy was carrying the men of the 27th Indian infantry brigade, but on reaching their allotted camp site they had found it flooded out, and had therefore pushed on to their final destination at Tripoli. Darkness overtook them and rain was falling heavily before they arrived, but all reached camp safely except for Magh Singh's personal vehicle, which was bringing up the rear. The accident occurred at a small bridge over a swollen stream in the early hours of the morning and only 500 yards from their new camp, where for some reason the truck fell into the stream and was washed down into the Mediterranean. The bodies were recovered four days later and were cremated in accordance with Hindu rites. Shortly after this, three officers of the unit met Colonel Hayward in a chance encounter and heard that he was shortly to be married and in April, Chand Singh was able to represent the unit-and Jodhpur-at his wedding.

Whilst in Syria orders were received to proceed to the Tehag Mobilisation Centre in the

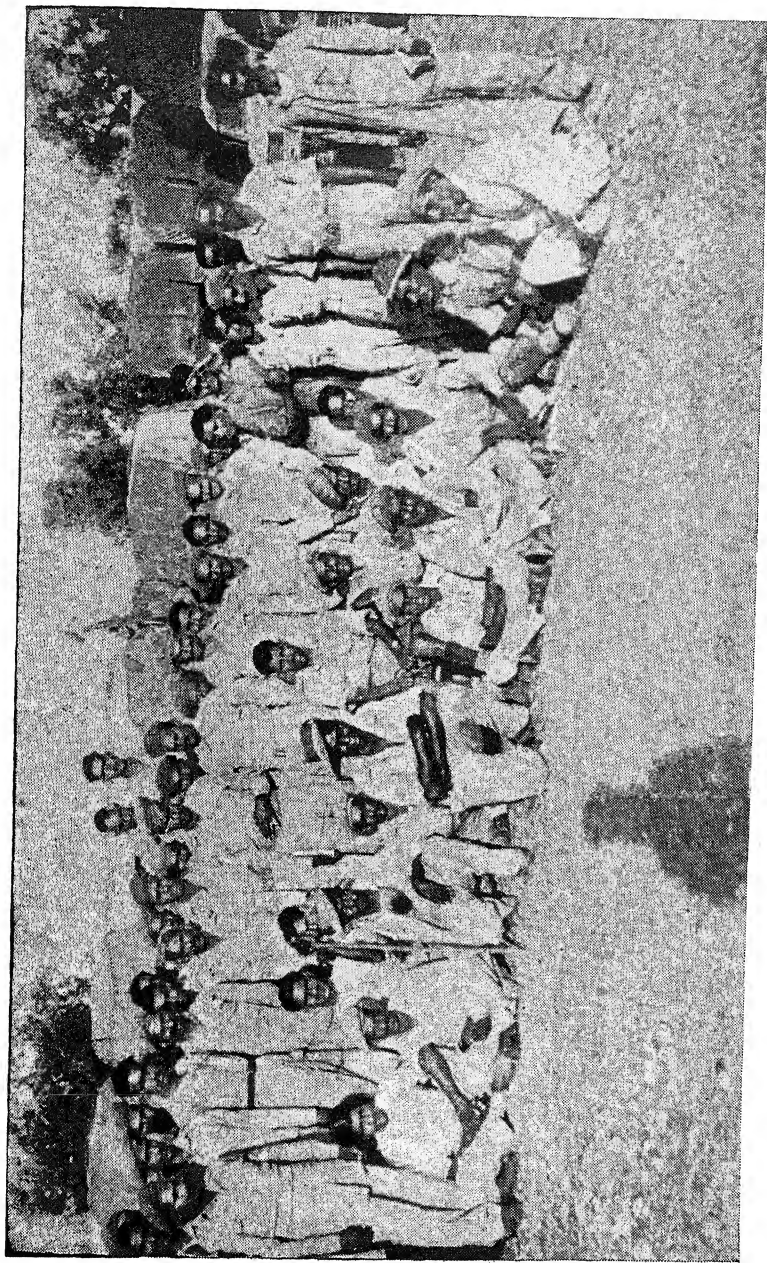
M.E.F. After three years in the Persia and Iraq Command and Paiforce this promise of a change of scene was received by all ranks with great enthusiasm. From here the Company proceeded to the C.M.F. and sailed from Alexandria for Italy in three different ships all of which were in separate convoys. On this journey this unit took its vehicles with them which was a great relief to everyone after the chaos that had resulted on separation from their vehicles for the journey from India to Iraq. The convoy in which Mod and Sultan's platoons found themselves was heavily attacked from the air off Benghazi and bombs dropped all round them, and for a few anxious moments it looked as if they could not avoid being hit, but the raiders were eventually driven off without the loss of a ship. Sultan at the time had been lying on his bunk with a temperature of 104° but hastily donned his clothes and dashed on deck with his life belt. When the attack was over he was surprised to find that his fever had left him, and the medical officer was most perturbed to find that bombs had been more effective than his pills ! During the few exciting moments Mod had attached himself to the gunners and helped them feed the shells to the gun.

Different platoons of the unit landed at Taranto, Brindisi, and Bari, three ports around the heel of Italy, and concentrated at Brindisi soon afterwards. Here they were engaged in dock clearance once again as in the early days at Basra. They still formed a part of the 16th L of C column, commanded by Lt.-Colonel Edgle, R.A.C.S., together with five other Indian general transport companies, as in the period of the "Aid to Russia" convoys. Two platoons

were later detached to work in the biggest ammunition depot in this war theatre.

In October, the whole unit was split up and each platoon worked self-contained over a long L of C. The H.Q. was at Andria and the platoons were spread out along the Adriatic between Brindisi and Pescara. Sultan's platoon busied themselves in carrying dismantled Bailly bridges from the Sangro to the new front line where they were to be used in further advances. Mod and his platoon settled down amidst the Foggia group of airfields, where he and some of his men picked up an American accent, and Mod bartered his whisky ration for ever-sharp pencils and other equally useful products of American canteens. Chand and his platoon continued to work in the ammunition depot where they waged continual warfare with the brigands and gangsters of Canosa and Andria, the breeding ground of Al Caponi and other infamous gangsters, who twice raided their lines unsuccessfully. Abernethy and his Kayamkhanies remained on in Brindisi on dock clearance duties where they made a name for themselves by clearing more stores than the three platoon company also employed there.

By the middle of December, the whole company was again concentrated in Brindisi and took part once again in the endless duty of docks clearance. The vehicles were employed practically throughout the day and night in an ingenious system of imports and exports shifts, which gave little time for regular maintenance. The American four-wheel-drive vehicles, with which the unit had been equipped since their employment on the "Aid to Russia" convoys, were



Men of No. 54 (Jodhpur) Company with some West African troops at Foggia, Italy.

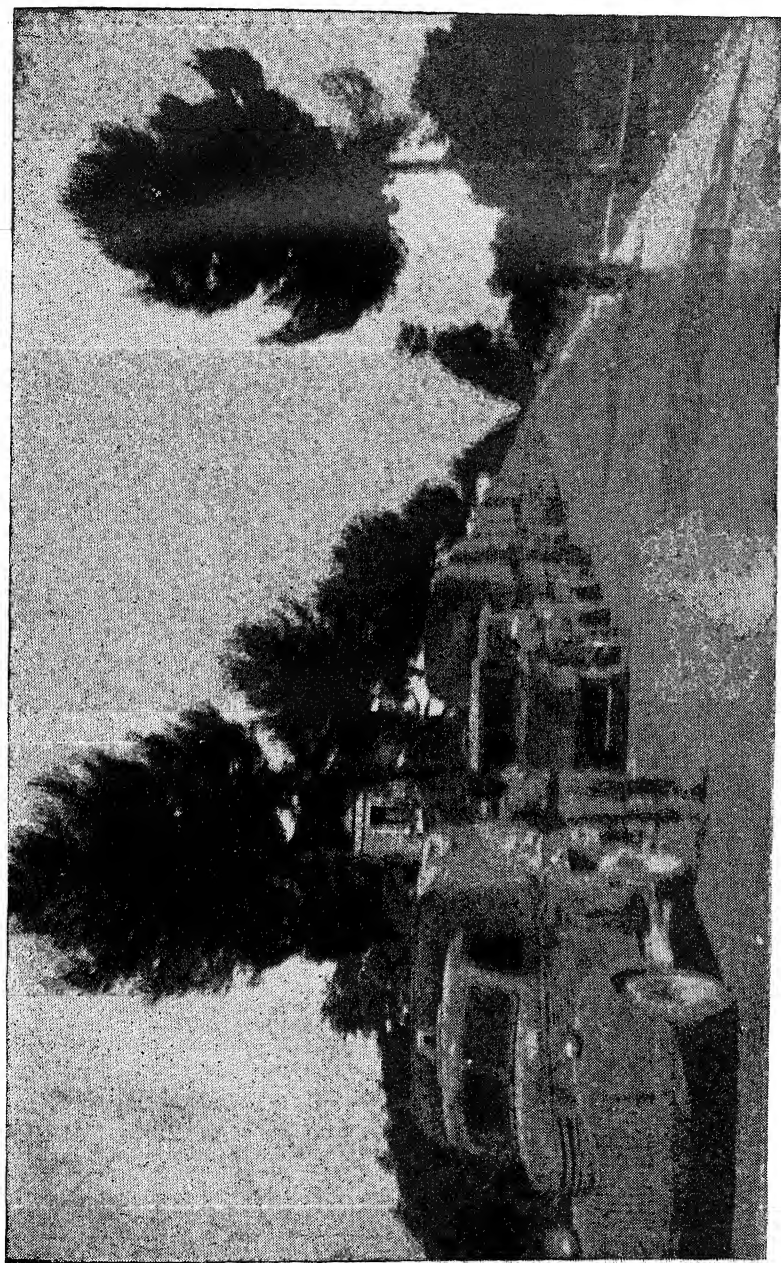
practically the only vehicles of the kind in the service and they were the only ones in the Italian war theatre. There were, therefore, no spares of any kind available, but in spite of this the full complement of load carrying vehicles was invariably kept on the road. The Mechanical Inspection Directorate had given the unit an excellent report on its upkeep and maintenance of these vehicles, especially as not a single load carrying vehicle had been evacuated to a third-line repair unit due to accident, but after the very strenuous work that they had been engaged on for over six months in Persia and Italy, they were showing signs of wear and tear. It was, therefore, decided to re-equip the unit with Dodge 3-tonners, and a complete new fleet was issued. An amusing incident occurred in Brindisi on New Year's night. The Marwaris had just gone peacefully to sleep when they were awakened by a mad cacophony of sound, made up of sirens, hooters, rifle and machine gun fire, and even the fire of heavy ordnance. All ranks promptly manned their alarm posts and prepared to drive off the raiders. Later, it took some time to explain to the bemused Marwaris that this was not an air raid but only the local inhabitants celebrating the arrival of the New Year !

Whilst billeted in a large Italian naval barracks at Brindisi, together with the Jaipur Guards, the unit was honoured by a visit from the Maharaja of Jodhpur, accompanied by his younger brother, Colonel Ajeet Singh, and the Thakur of Kuchaman. This was the first time the men had seen their Maharaja since the hill driving competition at Lalsagar in Jodhpur nearly four years before, and it was a great event

to meet him again so far from their native land. Other inspections followed, that of General Whitty, D.S.T. in that War theatre, and the District and Area commanders, all of whom were much impressed by the efficiency and discipline of the unit. At this period also, Mod, together with Major Kalyan Singh of the Jodhpur Lancers, paid a short visit to the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, who were at that time in action in the Gothic line. During February, Major Fowler fell sick, after having commanded the company for over two years, and Major Willmer took over command.

At the end of April 1945, the unit was earmarked for work in the front line and came under command of the Eighth Army and was allotted to the 46th (British) Division. The next few days, the unit took part in a fast convoy up nearly the whole length of Italy, from Taranto to Farli, carrying personnel of the division, for both the British troops and the Marwaris were equally keen to be in 'at the kill' which was now obviously not far off. When the surrender of all the German forces in Italy came on May 5th, 1945, the unit found itself at Ferrara, just behind the front line, where they met the Jodhpur Sardar Infantry in action.

The war in Italy was over and the fighting troops could pause for breath, but the work of all transport units in the area increased tremendously almost before the sound of the last shots had died away. Their main work was the carriage of German prisoners of war to rapidly erected prisoners of war cages throughout the area. Here an early difficulty manifested itself. The Marwari was so security minded and so well versed in security principles that whenever a



The Company halted on a road outside Rome.

prisoner of war, anxious to get to the nearest cage for food and rest, attempted to assist the driver in finding his way, alert and ever suspicious Marwari promptly turned his vehicle in exactly the opposite direction! It was not easy to explain to him that with the cessation of operations and the 'cease fire' sounded the unarmed prisoner of war was not a particularly dangerous 'animal', and might at times actively assist his captors in reaching their destination, where they would both find food and rest.

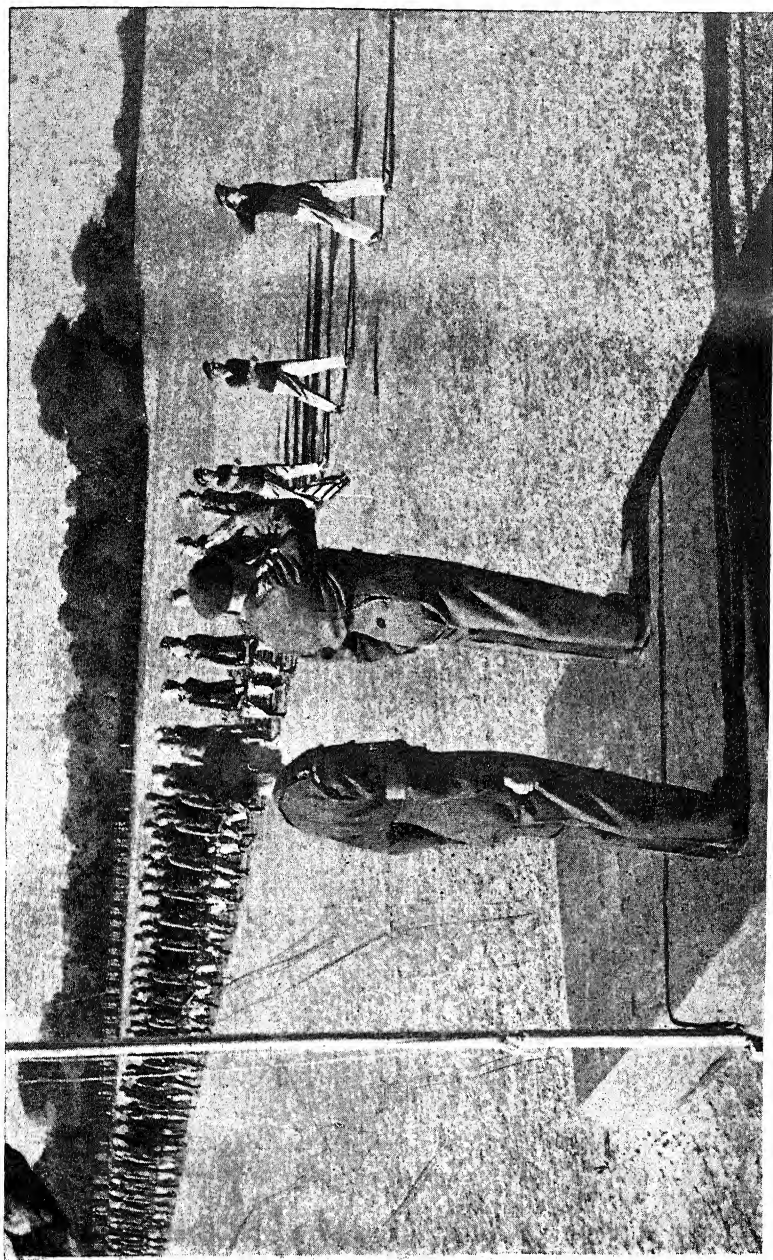
The roads were now very congested and when a clear stretch was reached, the order was 'minimum 30 M.P.H.' but in spite of this the unit maintained its reputation for safe driving. Early in June, the unit reached the outskirts of Venice and operated convoys up to within a few miles of Trieste, occasionally catching magnificent glimpses of the Alps far away to the North. It was here, just outside Venice, that on June 7th, orders were received to return to India.

These orders were received with mixed feelings. All ranks had been tremendously impressed by their first experience of an European country, so different from their own dry and barren country side, in spite of seeing it under war conditions. Whenever the nature of their work allowed, they lived in comfortable billets, the full comfort of which can only be appreciated by those who have lived for 3½ years under canvas. The country was so fresh and green, the colouring of sea, sky, and earth so vivid, and the crops so abundant. All ranks had soon picked up a smattering of Italian, which, together with the world wide sign language, was

sufficient to make them many friends. Through their travels up and down the country they had become self-reliant and resourceful and when, therefore, they finally turned their eyes from this green and pleasant land, it was with many a feeling of regret, in spite of their natural longing to see their homes and families again.

Most of the unit were able to visit Venice and travelled up and down the city of islands and canals in gondolas. Many too, in brief periods of rest, had been able to see Rome and visited the scenes of its former splendour. They were greatly attracted by the Vatican, that island of peace in the midst of war, and Mod and a few of his men took part in an audience held by His Holiness the Pope, and Mod even kissed hands and had a short talk with him, they also met a party of Indian religious students who had lived in the Vatican throughout the war. The one discordant note in Italy was the people, especially the Southern Italians, who, as petty and major thieves, can beat all-comers, including even the Iraqi!

The unit left Mestre, the suburb of Venice where they had spent the last few weeks, on June 7th, 1945, and, after handing over their vehicles in Naples, concentrated in Taranto. They sailed from this port soon after and landed in Bombay on July 9th, 1945, almost exactly four years since leaving India. Shortly after landing they moved to Delhi where they joined "B" M.T. Mobilization and Retraining Centre, R.I.A.S.C. Here they were joined by Sultan who had come on leave from Italy and after the conclusion of his leave had been appointed an Instructor at the R.I.A.S.C. V.C.Os' School at Bareilly.



No. 54 (Jodhpur) Company, R. I. A. S. C., marches past His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India, after his inspection of the Company at Delhi on December 21st, 1945.

Most of the men had not been on leave to their homes for the past four years, and some of them, who had not been able to take overseas leave in May, 1941, had not seen their homes and families since they first enrolled in the unit in the winter of 1940-41. The majority of the men were, therefore, given 2 months' special leave, and, after a visit from General Nepean, the officiating Military Adviser-in-Chief, to the State Forces, and Brigadier George, left for Jodhpur in a special train. They were given a splendid reception at the Railway Station and later on a large sumptuous dinner was given for them by His Highness the Maharaja of Jodhpur at his new Chittar Palace, that had been completed during the time the unit was overseas. His Highness shook hands with every member of the Company and talked with many of them on their experience in the many countries they had visited. After an evening that will long live in the memory of each one of them, the men left next morning on their well earned leave.

After their return from leave they found the senior Rajput officer, Major Mod Singh, had been appointed to command the Company, a well-earned tribute to his five years loyal and devoted service with the unit, and that they had again come under the command of their first Commanding Officer, as Lt.-Colonel A.J.B. Sinker had taken over command of "B" M.T., Mobilization and Retraining Centre, R.I.A.S.C., on return from two months leave in England.

CHAPTER XII

Speeches and Addresses.

THE following speeches or addresses to the people of Jodhpur State during the war are republished, as they go to show the spirit prevailing in the State all through those anxious years of war:—

Speech given by His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur of Jodhpur at the inauguration of the National War Front in Jodhpur—

“Sons and Daughters of Marwar ! My words to you on this occasion will be few, for the perilous times we live in call for deeds and not words. Up to now many millions of us in India have watched the war from afar; we have sat in safe security while our troops and those of our Allies have fought bravely to keep the brutal invader from our shores. But the time has come for all of us to give more help and we must be prepared for the worst. I want you to assist the war effort in every way you can; to steel your hearts to resolution and courage. There are many ways in which you can help. You can set aside your quarrels for a time and stand united. You can help to maintain calm and confidence by refusing to credit alarmist rumours and false reports. You can join in war activities of various kinds. This is a hard and bitter test, but we are, I firmly believe, going to win through to victory and peace. Let it be our boast in the peaceful years to come that we, everyone of us, did something to secure the Victory and peace which we hope our children and grand-children will enjoy.”



Officers of No. 54 (Jodhpur) Company, R. I. A. S. C. (G. T.)

Top Row.—Lt. Durjan Singh. Lt. Ram Singh

Seated.—Left to Right—Major Mod Singh, O. C., 54 (Jodhpur) Company,
RIASC (G. T.)

Lt.-Col. A. J. B. Sinker, O. C., "B" M. T. Mob
and Retraining Centre, RIASC.

Captain Sultan Singh

On Ground.—Captain Chand Singh.

Lieut.-Colonel Sinker raised and was the first O. C. the Company, and was holding the appointment of O. C., "B" M. T. Mob and Retraining Centre, R. I. A. S. C., at Delhi on the return of the Company.

Broadcast message given by His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur on the United Nations Flag Day—

“By the mercy of Almighty God, by the valour of our armed forces, by the strong help which our mighty Allies are rendering to us, our land has so far been preserved from the horrors of invasion and War. Let us all in gratitude offer our heartfelt thanks to Providence for our deliverance from evils which have befallen others no less deserving of peace and happiness than ourselves. Let us on this momentous occasion dedicate ourselves to the support of the noble cause for which our forces and those of our Allies are fighting; and let us unite in the determination to do what we can to bring the war to a victorious end and to restore peace and happiness to this stricken and suffering world.”

Speech made by Shri Bada Maharaj Kumar Sahib at Sadri—

“In Jodhpur we are determined to do all in our power to keep this tyranny from approaching India and to defeat the forces of evil and restore tranquility in the troubled world.

“Ensure that the armed forces which include our gallant regiments from Jodhpur, which have gone forth to fight valiantly for us on the battle fields shall be backed in full measure by the courage and determination of their relations and comrades who are living in security at their homes in Marwar.

“Let us have nothing to do with those who come among us to sow the seeds of Disharmony,

Discontent, and Distrust, and let us banish those who delight to spread grossly exaggerated stories and even deliberate untruths. Let us have confidence and dispel all doubts. There is no place in Marwar for panic-mongers and defeatists. The State of Jodhpur has stood the test of time now for 700 years, and I look forward to its even more glorious and happy future, which is assured if we stand together and place our implicit trust in our Gods and remain truly loyal to our great hearted Ruler and the illustrious traditions of Marwar.”

Speech made by Colonel Maharaj Shri Sir Ajit Singhji Sahib, Leader, National War Front (Jodhpur).—

“I know what land I am standing upon. I am standing upon the soil of which every particle is loud with selfless sacrifice every inch of which is stamped with heroism, of which every single inhospitable hillock resounds with tales of terrific exploits, of which every sand ridge is alive with the spirit of unbending Honour.

“Whenever calamity has overcast this land, every son of the soil has been true to the commands of the Lord of Navkoti Marwar, not a child has wavered under the five coloured flag of Ran-banka Rathore. This hour calls for that ever green stamp of valour. At this hour I expect to see the same sentiments on the countenance of you all, to hear the same words from your lips, with one heart, with one voice. We will stake our life to protect our country, we will perish to defend its honour. We will never bow our head before the foe. One and united

underneath it, we will fight for the glory of our flag, and we will not stop till we reach Victory."

At a banquet given by His Highness at Raikabagh Palace on November 27th, 1940, the Hon'ble Sir Arthur Lothian, Resident for Rajputana, made the following speech:—

"I am aware of Your Highness' dislike for public speeches, a dislike which I confess I share, but I feel that at this critical juncture in the world's affairs, it would not be right for me, as the local representative of His Majesty the King Emperor, to omit this opportunity of expressing gratitude for the splendid part Jodhpur is playing in the War. My remarks call for no reply on the part of Your Highness.

"Rajputs have always been famed for their martial qualities, but with the passage of time some of the clans have got soft. Fortunately, this is not true of Jodhpur, where they still retain their more virile qualities and some of the best soldiers the Indian Empire produces come from this hard and stern country of Marwar. The Jodhpur Government have already sent an infantry battalion and a cavalry regiment on service outside the State. Their reputation I need scarcely say is second to none, a fact which will, I hope, be recognised in a striking way in the near future, a result undoubtedly due in large measure to the expert and loyal assistance rendered you by Brigadier Duncan. The Jodhpur Government are also raising a mechanised transport unit, and are helping in the air, both as regards machines and training. The State, from its Ruler to its nobles, officials and common people under the stimulating leader-ship

of Maharaj Shri Ajit Singh, His Highness' brother, has contributed most liberally to various War Funds.

"His Highness personifies the spirit of Jodhpur, and I would ask you all to drink his health enthusiastically for the splendid example he has shown in this war by actively serving with the fighting forces, just as his famous uncle Sir Partap was an inspiration to all during the last war."

Speech given by Lt.-Colonel Sir Donald M. Field, C.I.E., Chief Minister, Government of Jodhpur—

"We may be thankful—many millions of us—that the self sacrifice, valour, and endurance of hosts of others have kept us secure in India. We can take legitimate pride in the prowess displayed by our forces, knowing as we do, that India is worthily and formidably represented in all the Fighting forces.

"But do not many of you feel—as I do at times—some strain of self reproach mingling with the feeling of thankfulness for self and pride in our fighting men? Why should we lie easy and live secure when so many others are suffering and fighting for our common cause? Why is the burden of suffering so unevenly distributed? Well, of course, we cannot all go forth and fight, for war is not merely a matter of fighting with lethal weapons. Some of us are more usefully employed where we are; some of us are past military age and so on. But if you agree with me so far, you will also agree, I trust, that any pricking of conscience, any tinge of self

reproach can best be eliminated in the process of helping the war effort and all that it implies. If we cannot take a more active part, at least we can help. So let us all agree to help, in the many ways open to us, with all our strength and resources.”

Broadcast speech on “JODHPUR’S WAR EFFORT” By Major F. Steel, Finance Minister, Jodhpur, in May 1941—

“It is a great privilege to be asked to broadcast an anniversary talk on the war effort of this happy State, the Ruler of which, as head of the Rathore clan of Rajputs, bears the proud motto of ‘Ran Banka’, or ‘Foremost in battle’.

“Cares of State and responsibilities at home have prevented His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur from achieving his ambition to fight in person against the enemy of India, the British Empire, and the world, but his loyalty was immediately expressed by the offer of his personal services and all the resources of his State to the Crown. The immediate effects of this were a contribution of three lacs of rupees to the Viceroy’s War Purposes fund, the placing of all his personal aircraft at the disposal of the R.A.F. in India or to the Government of India, with whom they are all ‘doing their bit’, and the undertaking of an intensive course of training with the R.A.F. for which his rank of Air Commodore and his personal interest have created a stimulus unique in India.

“Although His Highness has not been permitted to take an active part with the fighting services, he is at present ‘somewhere out of India,’

visiting one of the battle-fronts in which Indian and Imperial troops are engaged. It is to be hoped that he has seen or will see something of his own troops to whom his presence will be an inspiration, and it is certain that his return will provide a further incentive to those of us who are staying at home.

"In referring to the resources and war efforts of the State, pride of place must naturally be given to the Military element, and so far the Jodhpur units, though they probably fall short of their ambitions in the matter, have worked up to a standard of which any Indian State may be proud.

"The right of our line, the Jodhpur Lancers were the first complete cavalry or infantry unit of any Indian State to be taken for service with the Crown Forces, they were the first to be absorbed into the Indian Army and the first to be selected for mechanisation.

"This last choice, though separating them from their beloved horses, and inevitably delaying the date of their first arrival at the Front, is an outstanding compliment which should console them individually and as a whole for the temporary set back to their naturally martial proclivities. They have taken to their new and strange duties like ducks to the water, they are working up to schedule and they may be confident that at the first possible opportunity they will be given the chance of emulating their forebears outstanding achievements.

"The Sardar Infantry, though originally elected for Frontier defence, soon showed that

their efficiency warranted a change of role to that of a unit fit for service overseas, where they now are. Military considerations prevent the publication of their whereabouts but I am permitted to say that they have received an excellent report from the Commander-in-Chief under whom they are serving.

“Like some other Indian States, Jodhpur undertook to recruit and give preliminary training to a Company of the Royal Indian Army Service Corps, which under the name of No. 54 (Jodhpur) General Purposes Transport Company, is inextricably bound up with the place of its birth. We shall for many a day remember the long convoys of ‘Learner’ lorries in and around Jodhpur, and no one who saw it will forget the hair-raising exhibition of section driving which, after only four months of training, they gave on the rocky hillsides of Lalsagar. This unit, too, was the first of its kind to be reported as fit for overseas, where, from latest reports, it is carrying out very heavy duties.

“The departure of these front-line units left a big gap which was rapidly filled by the formation of the Jodhpur Lancers and Sardar Infantry depots and the creation of the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry and the Bodyguard Squadron. The first two of these are working at full pressure to provide reinforcements for their units. The 2nd Jodhpur Infantry is complete and ready for whatever service it may be called upon to render, and the Bodyguard Squadron, raised for internal security and guard duties, has brought back to Jodhpur some of the horses of which the Jodhpur Lancers sadly ‘made much of’ for the last time some months ago.

“The hum-drum accompaniment of military service-recruiting is just as necessary as the presence of fighting units at the front, and in this respect, too, Jodhpur has done pre-eminently well. Over 2,000 men have been enrolled for the State Service units alone, the M.T. Company is replenished with a steady monthly reinforcement, recruiting in the State for the Indian Army has been so good as to warrant the opening of a branch recruiting office in Jodhpur, and, lastly, but by no means least, the Government of India has selected one of our local ‘personalities’ as Honorary Technical Recruiting Officer for the increase of India’s War potential by the augmentation and organisation of skilled trades.

“Jodhpur’s Military effort is one of which any State may be proud and I make no apology for departing from the anonymity which covers other individual efforts in this talk by referring to the name of Brigadier R.C. Duncan, Commandant of the Jodhpur State Forces, under whose untiring energy and flair for personal contacts, the whole machine has been created and welded together. His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur has paid him a pretty compliment by appointing him Honorary Colonel of the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry, but, above this, his name will always be remembered with affection by the soldiers of Jodhpur for whom he has done so much and for whose achievements in this war he has sacrificed his personal ambitions in higher spheres.

“If this war has shewn us anything, it is that it concerns all of us and not only the fighting services. The civil population of Britain is living as much “at the front” as the army, the R.A.F. and the Royal and Merchant Navies,

Their efforts maintain the war machine and it is no less the duty of us "stay at homes", that any account of Jodhpur's war efforts should include the work of its civilians.

"The State Government needed no urging to take immediate steps to do all that it could, particularly in the matter of letting its officials know that the security of tenure of their posts would not be affected by their joining Military Service. The principle adopted was that no Jodhpur employee should be penalised in any way. Their jobs are kept open for them for they receive their due incremental advancements and they continue to earn their civil service benefits, subscribe to Provident Funds, and maintain their seniority. Any differences between civil and military pay, if the latter is lower, are paid by the Government.

"The families of the soldiers in the State Forces received consideration immediately the units left Jodhpur, by the grant of separation allowances which are paid at their homes. The special organisation created for this is also now being utilised for the payment of family allotments by men at the Front."

THE LAST CHAPTER.

SO, on August 15th, 1945, at 5-30 A.M., the greatest war in history came to an end. The struggle, which had lasted nearly six years, had been carried on without pause day or night for three hundred and ten weeks. The ghastly destruction, never equalled in human record, stopped. Vast areas of the earth and millions of homes lay desolate, the hearts of many millions, who had lost their loved ones, had been broken, the joy taken out of their lives. In the silence, as the thunder of war ceased to echo in human ears and the clouds rolled back, the grim price humanity had paid stood out in sharp perspective.

I have recorded in this history the part played by the Jodhpur State Forces in the Second World War. Whatever the manner of the narrative may be found to lack, the matter of it has much merit, and should serve as an inspiration to those who come after.

There was no hanging back on the part of the men and boys of Marwar to join up in the fighting ranks. They came in a constant stream to Jodhpur to enlist, and the Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, was at no time worried as regards numbers or the standard of material required for the rank and file. The Jodhpur State Forces at the outbreak of war, consisted of about 1700 men only, and by July 1945 the strength amounted to over 7000 men; in addition, many thousands were enlisted from the State for the Indian Army. These facts speak for themselves.

In this history, pride of place must, most certainly, be given to the units of the Jodhpur

State Forces, which served outside the State. They did not all have the opportunity of taking part in the fighting. The Jodhpur Sardar Infantry and No. 54 (Jodhpur) General Purposes Transport Company, R.I.A.S.C., were lucky in this respect, and they made full use of the chance offered them, not only to maintain the reputation of Jodhpur State from a military point of view, but to enhance it. For the Jodhpur Lancers, except for the spell of coast watching on the South East coast of India, and until the regiment proceeded overseas to Persia and Iraq in the Spring of 1944, much of the period of the war was spent in training—hard training under field service conditions, but without the excitement of battle—always with the expectation of being sent to one of the fighting fronts, and just when hopes ran high and warning orders had been received, the orders for a move had been cancelled. Much of the work of the 2nd Jodhpur Infantry was dull and monotonous. However, in all the units, morale remained high throughout the war, and they all worthily maintained the military traditions of the State.

For those who had to remain behind at the Training Centres and at Headquarters, Jodhpur State Forces, the work was unceasing all through those years of war. There could be no slackening off, even during the intense heat of Summer at Jodhpur, as, with the continual expansion of the State Army, the work was constantly on the increase.

The Jodhpur Government and Headquarters, Jodhpur State Forces, can take a great pride in the fact that they co-operated to the full with

the Government of India and the Military Adviser-in-Chief, Indian States Forces. There was hardly a single proposal submitted by the Military Adviser-in-Chief or the Political Department, which was not accepted immediately without demur. Thanks are due to the Military Adviser-in-Chief, Indian States Forces, and to the Military Advisory Staff; particularly to the late Lt.-Colonel H. B. Greatwood (later killed in Syria), Lt.-Colonel K. C. S. Erskine, and Lt.-Colonel P. J. Hilliard, who were the Military Advisers, Rajputana States Forces, during the war. They invariably showed a sympathetic understanding of our difficulties, and they did all they could towards solving our many problems.

There was the fullest co-operation between the various units and Headquarters, Jodhpur State Forces, and a spirit of brotherhood and understanding existed without which it would have been impossible to achieve as much as was done. Many reports were received at Jodhpur from the various Commanders under whom our units were serving outside the State, and it was apparent that the same spirit of co-operation existed. The units of the Jodhpur State Forces were always ready and willing to answer any call that was made upon them.

Both His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur and Lt.-Colonel Sir Donald Field, the Chief Minister, gave all possible help at all times, and they took the greatest interest in the activities of the State troops, and this, undoubtedly, had an excellent effect on the general morale of the Jodhpur State Forces, which remained high throughout the period of the war. The visits of His Highness to his units serving overseas, and

the trouble he took in enquiring into any difficulties there might be, and the steps he took to remedy them, were particularly appreciated.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity of stating how intensely proud I am of having had the honour of holding the appointment of Commandant, Jodhpur State Forces, throughout the war, and of having been associated with His Highness the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur of Jodhpur and his splendid troops during those momentous years.

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